

LAKE FIELD AND FOREST

~FRANK A BATES~

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STORIES OF
LAKE, FIELD
...AND...
FOREST.

Rambles of a Sportsman-Naturalist.

With Ten Half-Tone Engravings.

By

FRANK A. BATES,

Marine.

Author of "Game Birds of North America," "Rambles of an
Entomologist," "Wanderings in New Hampshire," etc.

SOUTH BRAINTREE, MASS :

FRANK A. BATES.

SCIENTIFIC AND HISTORICAL BOOKS.

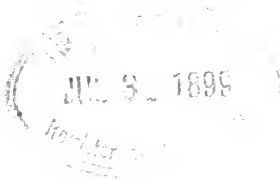
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*I sat by the shore of the sounding sea,
And a sweet, sad song it sang to me.
It sang of vessels buried deep,
And men entranced in death's deep sleep.
It sang of battles, whose terrible roar
Resounded loud from shore to shore.
It sang of monsters whose slinky forms
Clove the shining waters, deep-hid from storms.*

*Then the music changed and it sang of the sun,
Whose glittering beams made the ripples run
In glistening lines to the sandy shore,
Where lovers walked by the breakers' roar.
Where beautiful shells in silence crept,
And fishes swam and sea-birds slept.
And it told me to listen, then tell their lore
To the readers, who run these pages o'er.*

GROUSE SHOOTING
EXTRAORDINARY.

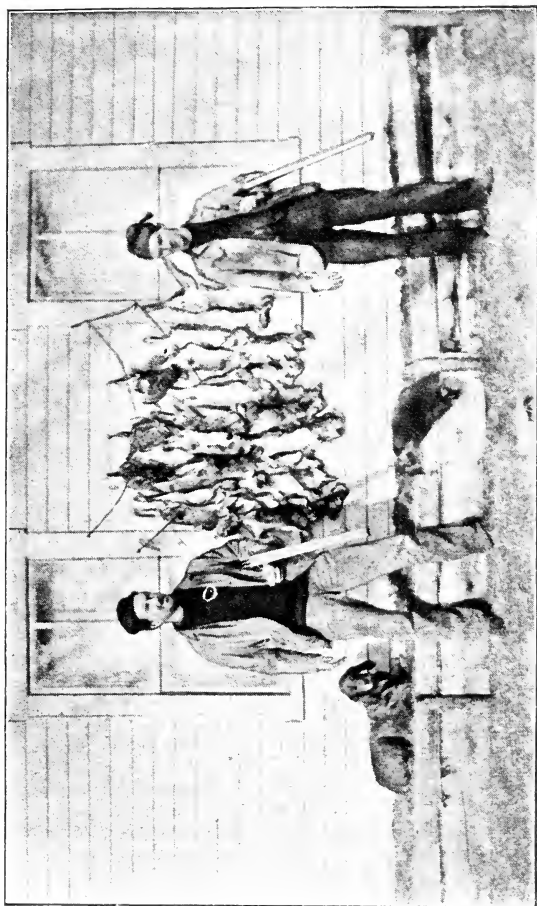


Photo by C. E. Bailey.

SPOILS OF THE HUNTER.

GROUSE SHOOTING EXTRAORDINARY.

IT had been a hard day in the fields, for the birds were wild and wary. And when we drew up our chairs around the fire, after supper, it was with a sigh of relief to get our boots off.

After the pipes were lighted, a comparison of experiences was inaugurated, and B. told how the old cock partridge had dodged behind a cedar, just about as soon as he got up from the covert; while P. told of his surprise when he flushed a bird, and it fell to a shot from a thicket close by, just as he caught sight of it, and Will stepped out to retrieve his bird, and was just about as surprised to see P. standing there with gun at a ready.

If you want to hear stories of gunning, fishing or anything else, in their pristine vigor, you want to sit over a rock-maple fire, in the kitchen of a gunning camp, after the day's sport is over, and hear them as they drop fresh from the lips of the actors them-

selves, unattended by the results of forgetfulness from the lapse of time, or fear of the blue pencil of the editor.

On this particular evening, however, one of our circle was a professional man from the city, who had been a great traveller, and who, in the course of his varied experience, had been an officer in the U. S. Regular Army.

The talk had been mainly upon the tricks and dodges of the wily ruffed grouse, or partridge, as he was termed by our coterie. And by the way, "for ways that are dark, and tricks that are vain," this bird can give aces to any other bird and win out every time.

Finally our friend, whom we will term the Doctor, spoke up and said :

"You fellows have been telling how smart and tricky your grouse were here (and I fully agree with you) what do you think of killing nearly as many grouse with stones, as twenty men did with guns, and in less time?"

"O, come off! Doc. tell that to the children!" was the cry from all directions.

"Well, its so," said the Doctor, "and I was the one who did it."

“Let’s have the story,” said every one and the chairs were hitched up a little closer.

“I was looking at that prairie chicken in the case in the other room, while I was waiting for supper and thinking about the work that’s being done here in Massachusetts to restock the covers with imported game birds, and it brought back some of the times I’ve had shooting in the west. By the way, where was that bird shot, and when?”

“I shot it,” said Will, right here in Winchendon, on the sixth day of November, 1896. I thought it was a partridge when it got up, and I did not find out what it was till I picked it up. I know of two others that were shot near here, in the same way, and one was found dead beside the road, where it fell, after it struck the telephone wire. I would not have shot the one I did, if I had known what it was.”

“Well, there’s no doubt that it was one of those that were put out around Fitchburg, is there?”

“Oh, no! that’s where it came from all right. But lets have that story about stoning partridges to death.”

“It was not exactly stoning partridges, for they were blue grouse (*C. obscura*).

While I was stationed at Fort Spokane, in Washington, in 1884, we were supplied with a certain number of shotguns and ammunition therefor by the Government, to be used in supplying the Post with game, and upon requisition, they would be served out to the men, when they desired to go shooting, but many of the men preferred to use their rifles, for the grouse will run about upon the ground, and when flushed they fly to the trees, where one can easily secure them by a shot in the neck or fore part of the body, but if you hit them from behind in the backbone, there will be but little of the bird left to carry to camp.

One lovely day in July, about twenty men, some with ponies and some without, started out grouse shooting in various directions. Not feeling very much like this sort of sport, and still desiring to take a little walk, I vainly endeavored to convince some one that they could not do better than to accompany me, and finally started off alone up toward a ravine, where it was reported that the berries were thick, and without a gun, for I did not

care to be bothered with the weight of a Springfield rifle on a warm day in July. I hunted for the berries for some time without success and at last came to the Government wood-pile, where I found a team and outfit, provisions, fire smouldering, etc., but no one about. This was perhaps no unusual occurrence, but it was very convenient later on.

Farther on, I saw a lot of little grouse running about in the grass, then some larger ones, and finally flushed some large old birds, which lit in some trees just above. One of them settled himself cosily upon a limb, and sat there, cocking his head at me from side to side, looking, for all the world, like an old hen. Just for fun, I picked up a stone and threw it at him, but he never even moved. This promised a little sport, so I drew up on to the side of the ravine about to a level with the bird, where there seemed to be an abundance of this sort of ammunition, and commenced a fusilade upon him, of which he took no notice, until a large, slowly flying missile took him on the side of the body, and he deigned to move about a foot along the limb. Another smaller one, travelling with more force, took him in the head

and he dropped off the limb dead, I followed up the same tactics upon the balance of the flock, and before long had two old birds and four half grown young, when I got tired of throwing stones.

I went back to the outfit, confiscated some salt-pork and flour, stirred up their fire, and cut up two of my young birds in their pan with some pork, cooked them, thickened the fat with flour for gravy, and as the birds were young and tender, I enjoyed a much better meal than I would have had at the mess table.

I got back to camp with two old birds and two young ones, and when tattoo was beaten, none of the men who went out with guns had brought in a bird, although they had been hunting them all day. Just before taps, two of the soldiers, who had gone twenty miles up the river, taking turns at riding, came in with quite a bunch, but I nearly beat the crowd, with nothing but stones for ammunition.

The character of the blue grouse is rather stolid, and indifferent, but when they start they go like a flash, looking like a blue streak

in the air, and as they were heavy, they made quite a commotion when they flew.

When hunting these birds in the winter, we used to cross the river and take to the bank, which was the lower of six terraces, and go over a piece of each one in turn. The birds would flush from the lower one which was covered with a thick mat of sage brush, and fly up, keeping about one terrace in advance of us. The second terrace was more thinly overgrown with the brush which was mixed with a bush bearing a berry, upon which the birds fed. Each terrace is more thinly covered as you rise until the sixth is reached, which is covered with pines; here the birds take to the trees, and we would knock them off with a rifle bullet.

On the warmer days of winter they would come out and bask in the sun, on the bare spots, between the bushes, and it was sometimes, especially when there was a crust, no small job to climb up the steep slopes after them.

It is to be hoped that this is not one of the birds to be imported here, the gunners would faint at the idea of a bird that did not put the breadth of a county between them,

the instant of being flushed ; but joking one side, it does not seem as though this was a bird to be considered desirable from a sportsman's point of view, although they would no doubt stand the climate, since the thermometer runs as low as 48 degrees below zero in the winter, and the men would sit and play cards with their overcoats on, ear laps down, and the edge of the table within six inches of a red-hot stove. "Chain-lightning whiskey" (a compound of kerosene, tobacco and murder) would freeze on the table, but yet they never heard of a man freezing.

Summer was as bad the other way, for the mercury was at 116 degrees on the parade ground for ten days together, and not a drop of rain all summer.

Still the change might have an injurious effect, for all our attempts at acclimatization of birds are not as successful as that of the English sparrow."

"No," says Will. "None of the birds, except the quail, seemed to live here a great while, but I don't see any reason why the pinnated grouse did not live and breed here. There used to be plenty of them here, and

there are some now, down on Martha's Vineyard. The climate can't be much worse for them here, than it is on the prairies."

"If you had ever been out on the grounds where the prairie chickens live you would change your mind," said the doctor." The trouble here, I think, is the lack of proper food. The chicken feeds on grain, almost exclusively, when there is any, but of course they eat enormous quantities of grasshoppers and other insects, and when driven to it will eat buds of bushes, but they pick up lots of grain on the stubble in the large wheat and corn fields of the west even in winter.

Now you know that our partridge, in the winter, feeds almost exclusively on buds and seeds of bushes ; and I think that the prairie hens put out here, did not find their accustomed food, and either left or died. At any rate very few of them ever bred. It is mighty risky business, trying to import animals to new countries ; you do not know what turn they will take.

I do not approve of introducing the Pheasant into Massachusetts. It sounds kind of big, but from what I have seen of them in

the North West, I would rather shoot one partridge than a dozen of them. They are quarrelsome and will drive out our grouse, for they will kill all the young birds they come across and keep the old ones so disturbed that they will not breed well. Let's go to bed."

FLY FISHING FOR
WHITE PERCH.

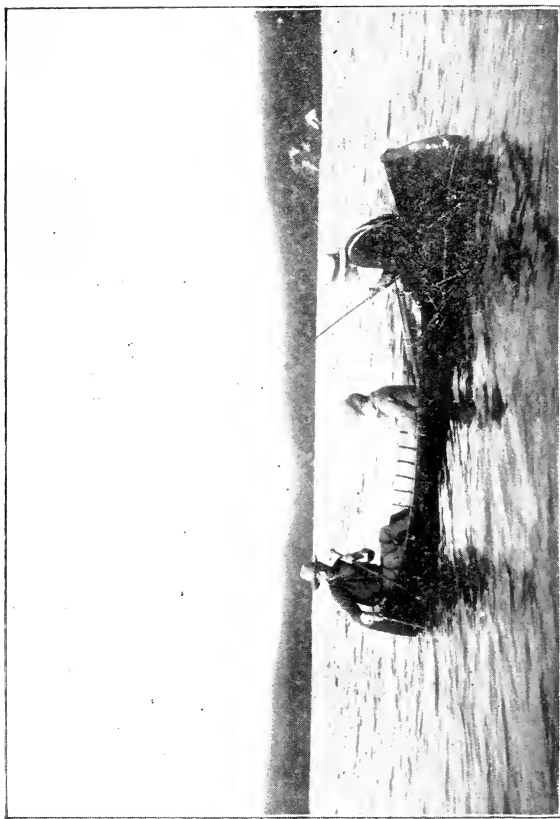


Photo. by L. F. Bosworth.

LANDING A BIG ONE.

FLY FISHING FOR WHITE PERCH.

ONCE upon a time, not many moons ago, there lived in the colonial town of Plymouth, a character by the name Bosworth; his friends called him "Les" but he would answer to anything, even the dinner bell. Now Les. was nothing, if not a sportsman. A good shot, handy with the rod, something of a naturalist, he dearly loved his gun and rod, not because they killed the game for him, but because they gave him an excuse for tramping the woods, or sitting in his boat on the pond. If he brought home a string of fish or a bunch of birds, he was happy, if not he was content, for he brought something that was not as visible, but fully as satisfying, which can only be appreciated by the lover of nature.

Now, Les had a score or more of friends, and they liked to be with him, whenever the stars were favorable, and among them were

two who have to do with this story. Never mind whether their names were Smith, Jones or Brown, or whether he himself gave the name of Bosworth to the town clerk when he went to get his marriage certificate. Its all the same. "What's in a name?" You could not improve the flavor of a catfish if you did call him a trout.

But to our two sports. The first and most important, in his own estimation at least, was Fred David. He came from "way down in Maine" and his head would never brush the cobwebs off a barn scaffold unless he stood on a milk-pail and then he would have to reach; in fact he made excellent ballast for a canoe, for when he sat on the bottom it was almost as good as a lead keel.

He liked to go fishing, and when the second of this trio, who we will call Ike, was likely to be somewhere near Les, Fred would make some sort of an excuse at the office, that his grandmother was sick or the plumbing was frozen up, or some such likely reason, and would start for home; but the attraction of the railroad was so great, he would be drawn away from the rectitude of

his path and would find himself on board the train for Plymouth.

Now Ike was no fisherman, he was what the sailors call a Jonah, he did not care whether the fish bit or not, and he would sit in the boat and stick his birch pole over the side and let the little fishes nibble off his bait, and go off in a "dope" and wonder where the fish lived winters, and whether the kingfisher, which was swearing at him from an adjacent stub, speared the fish or simply picked them up with his mouth, or whether or no the dragon-flies really ate the mosquitoes, and all such nonsense of no practical use to sensible people.

Now it came about, through the progression of events, that these three uniques of the human race, were, one day in the sultry month of August, lounging in a canoe on the placid waters of Billington Sea. Ike with his corn-cob pipe, which he forgot to pull, and his birch pole, with baitless hook dangling in the water. Les, with his old rod, delicately threaded with silken line, pulling in the fish for dinner, while Fred sat on the center thwart for ballast, and got off poor jokes on Ike, changed his tackle from gimp-snelled

bass-hook to No. 8 minnow every five minutes, alternating with a rubber frog or a Skinner spoon and occasionally pulling in a stray sun-fish which had lately left its mother, and had not yet learned it must not put too much trust in appearances.

“Well” says Fred, when for four minutes he had allowed his hook to stop in the water, “I do not believe there is a Bass in your old mud hole. I don’t care anything about catching those little perch, I want a Bass.”

“Sour grapes” ejaculates Les, “you have had on fourteen different hooks in the last hour, do you expect to catch Bass with a minnow hook?” Here he stopped to pull in a nice white perch. “Now you ask Ike and he will catch a Bass for you.”

“Ike, catch a Bass! Nit, he could not catch cold,” said Fred.

“Betcher I could” said Ike. “But you would take it back to the office and tell the boys you caught it.

“Oh! come off, Ike, fish in the cracker bag and catch your dinner. Why you haven’t caught a fish today.”

“Well you have” says Ike, “you’ve caught three sun-fish, a dozen of them would come

within an ounce of weighing. Say did you ever catch a fish with that flip-flap contrivance of yours?" Betcher never caught anything but a horn pout in your life. Own up now, you brag on your old trout rod, did you ever catch a trout?"

"Course I have, I caught one that weighed a pound last Memorial Day out of the old pork barrel pool up in Ashburnham. You see I dropped the fly——"

"Let up, Fred, let up. You have got sins enough without telling fish stories."

"Well, I can prove it by Charlie Bailey."

"Well, Bailey is good evidence, for he's fairly honest for a fisherman, but I will wait till he tells me so," said Ike.

Just then Ike's old birch pole gave a dip and away went the line, and out of water went a Bass, but he was fast hooked, and soon tired, and Les slipped the landing net under him and laid him in the bottom of the canoe.

"There Fred," said Ike, "I'll give him to you; take him back to Boston, and tell your own story about him."

"Well I'll be jigged" says Fred, "caught

a Bass on that old birch pole, a fool for luck ;” and Ike grinned.

“Now you boys have got done quarreling,” said Les, “lets go over to the shore and catch a mess of white perch on the fly ; they come up just at dusk to feed on the white millers that come off the shore at that time.”

“What yer givin us ?” says Ike. “White perch won’t rise to the fly, you want to find a rocky bottom, and use pond minnows or shrimp for bait. Betcher fifty dollars you never caught a white perch in shallow water in your life. Come off.

“Now old man” says Les, “don’t get rattey. Come over to the shanty, get my other rod, fling that old tree-trunk overboard, and fish like a gentleman.”

“Never caught a fish on a fly in my life,” Ike replied. “Its taking an unfair advantage of them, as Rowland Robinson says. Think of getting a mouthful of feathers when you expect a nice miller. Give the fishes a show, if they can steal your bait they get something to eat, and if they don’t, they get caught ; either way they get something. Say boys, did yer ever read any of Robinson’s

books. That chap knows what he is writing about. You can hear the leaves rustle, and the birds sing, when you read what he writes. And they say he is blind now.

“My, my, my! but it must be cruel for a chap like him, to love the woods and fields and know how pretty the trees look in the spring, and to smell the wild violets and hear the fish jump and the birds sing, and know that he can’t never see ’em any more. But if I could see him I think I could make him happier, by telling him how he has helped his fellow-men, who love these things, and can’t get out to see them, by putting down on paper just how they all are in words that sound like the jingle of the brooks. I wouldn’t be blind, but I would give a good deal to feel that I had his gifts. They say the next best thing to going fishing, is to read about it. But how about that perch fishing? Are you dead open on that yarn, Les?”

“Sure, Ike, sure, come over and try it, and you will never insult another Bass, by catching him on a fence rail.”

“Well, if Fred will lend me a couple, out of that three or four hundred feather contraptions he carries round in his pocket to

make folks think he is a fisherman, I don't mind. Come on. Betcher he don't get a bite, unless its skeeters."

* * * * *

A little later, and the three emerge from the shanty, and Ike has a rod, not a crooked, top-heavy birch tree, but an eight-ounce lancewood with reel and silk line, which he handles as if it were made of glass.

"By jing," he ejaculates, "if I ever get a fish on that bulrush, I shall bust it as sure as guns."

"Well you ought to be ashamed of yourself if you do, for I saw a four pound Bass landed with it, and he fought every inch of the line," says Les. "Now don't get rattled and thrash around as if you were driving pigs with a hickory goad. That rod will lay a fly on the water just as lightly as a feather would drop, and you can do it, too."

"All right, old man," replied Ike, "but just put Fred where I can't see him, for I shall bust the blasted thing over his head if he gets in the way. Come on with your fishes."

Les sits in the middle to handle the oars, Fred in the bows, and Ike in the stern, with instructions to keep their lines far apart, and the boat is laid up just outside the lily-pads which border the shore.

“Now Ike,” explains Les, “pull off about fifteen feet of line and throw it out on the water, and then lift the rod over your head and throw the fly right off in front of you, just as if you were going to snap a whip, but do it easy, and pull off a few feet from the reel every time it goes out till you have all you can handle, but don’t snap off the fly by being too quick about it.”

Ike soon gets the hang of the motion and Les slowly puts the boat along with easy strokes and frequent pauses, until a smothered ejaculation of “First fish” from Fred attracts their attention and he is observed to be reeling in a fish which seems to pull pretty hard, and he lifts out a sun fish, which is greeted with roars of laughter from the other two, and smothered ejaculations from Fred.

“There Les,” says Ike, “I told you Fred couldn’t catch anything but roaches. He is

no good, let him walk ashore and take a nap."

Just then Ike who has let his fly drift for a moment, is disturbed by a click of his reel which begins to run before his awkward fingers catch the spool, and he yanks a little perch into the boat.

"Hold on! hold on!" says Les, "don't yank 'em so. If that had been a good fish you would have broken the tip. You make me think of a chap that came down here with Bates this summer and camped over on the little island. You remember him, Fred, you were with Bates while he was here. I mean Dr. Brett. Well, Bates took him over to Boot Pond to fish, because this pond was "working" and the fish would not bite. They came down in style, had a team with them, and Bates' light canoe. They would put the boat in the wagon and drive all over the country, fishing where they wanted to. I went with them several times. Brett was a mighty good fellow to be out with, lots of fun in him, and took things as they came. Well Bates told me they were fishing way up in the toe of the Boot, and the perch were biting so fast that the bait was gobbled before

it was down long enough for Bass to see it, and Doc. was twitching them. He had good tackle, a fine reel, and a pretty fair split bamboo rod, for they came for Bass, and Bates believes in giving the fish a show, and getting all the fun he can out of it. Says the fish bite too fast to give him what fun he wants without wasting them. Well the first thing Doc. knew, he stiffpoled a little Bass right into the canoe."

" 'See here Doc.,' Bates says, 'I thought you came down here to give the Bass a try, and you don't give them a chance to try. I have my opinion of a man who would lose a hundred dollars worth of practice, spend twenty-five more for canned chicken and other grub that no sensible man ought to expect in camp, and the first Bass he gets he stiffpoles him into the boat; you ought to have a dose of your own medicine.' And Bates never lets him forget it either, for he socks it into him every time he meets him, and the only reply the doctor makes is, 'I believe in getting there, whether its fishing or physicking, and don't mind which method I practise either.'

“And what does that impudent Bates do, but throw in right where Doc. hooked the Bass and catches on to a big pickerel that weighed $3\frac{3}{4}$ pounds and landed him with a No. 3 hook tied on single gut. Ginger blue! I would give a quarter to have been there and seen the fun. There is more fun in catching one good fish, with light tackle like that, than there is in yanking out a ton with an old birch tree. Then he tells the doctor he did it to show him how.”

While the story was being told and the laugh going round, the flies were out again, and soon Ike had another strike from a big white perch, struck him right, played him in good style and brought him into the boat in good shape. This was several times repeated, but poor Fred never caught another fish, and Ike broke out with.

“Say Les., I told you Fred would get no bites but ‘skeeter bites,’ see him whack ‘em.”

“Confound the blasted mosquitos,” says Fred, “I can stand it not to catch any fish—

“Yes, you’re used to that,” says Ike.—

“Shut up, I’ve got the floor,” retorts Fred, “but hanged if I want to be chewed up by

mosquitoes. Talking about Bates, he is a pretty good sort of a fellow, but he roasts me worse than Ike does; every time I get a letter from him he socks it to me with his boot-heels and I expect any time to have him mop the floor with me."

But the dark had come, and the fish had stopped biting, and the boat was pulled out in the open waters of the lake, away from the hordes of hungry insects which flew about next the shores. Here the three friends lounged away the hours before bed-time in gentle converse best relished by fishermen.

As they pulled upon shore, Les says. "Now Ike, what do you say to white perch fishing with a fly?" "Well Les," he replied "when I want fun I shall use a fly, but when Fred David comes to see me and I have to feed him, I shall stick to the fattest minnows I can get. Its quicker. But you bet I have a rod just like this, as soon as I get to the city."

The next time Ike went to the village, he found a package at the express office, which contained a nice rod, sent him by his friend Fred, who knew that Ike's jokes on him

were friendly pats, and hence laid up no ill feeling.

Why do I spell Bass, with a capital letter? Because he is the king of fish and kings always have their names capitalized.—THE AUTHOR.

GOOSE SHOOTING
AT PLYMOUTH.



Photo by C. C. Wood.

RESULTS OF A VOLLEY.

GOOSE SHOOTING AT PLYMOUTH.

WHEN I was a boy—how long that seems, and it is not many years ago, yet what changes have been made since then—when I was a boy, I lived on a hill, a portion of a ridge, which divided the shores of Massachusetts Bay from a string of inland ponds, and it was a usual sight late in the fall to see flocks of geese flying over from the turbulent waters of the bay to the quiet haven of the fresh waters, and often within gunshot.

The first “honk” of the leader of the V-shaped skein brought the farmer from his barn, and the shoemaker from his last. The old gun, loaded with buck shot, had long been standing behind the door or hung upon the wall, ready for just such an occasion, and the progress of the flock could be noted by the fusilade which often followed it across the town. Sometimes after a shot, one was observed to throw up his wings and fall in a

confused mass to the earth; or leave his place in the procession, and lag behind, till with failing wing, he would glide toward the ground where he would soon be marked down in some field, or drop into the waters of a flooded meadow which bordered the river. In either case he was generally a "gone goose," for a raft or boat was usually hidden somewhere in the bushes along the shore, and it was not long before he received his "*coup de grace*," perhaps at the hands of some farmer lad with an old musket, a relic of the Civil War, then not long ended.

Even when the persecuted birds reached the ponds their trials were not over, for the shores of this retreat, which they sought for a rest from the buffetting waves, and to quench their thirst, were lined with "stands" behind which were more guns, and in front added dangers, in the shape of wooden and live decoys, alluring devices to attract them within gun shot.

I used to think that the live decoys seemed to be like some people I knew, anxious to get their mates into trouble, at least they would *honk* and flutter their wings and swim

back and forth to wile their wild relatives nearer to the masked batteries.

But that day is gone, and now they fly along the shore, or the few flocks that pass over, fly far beyond gunshot on their way to more distant ponds, for the places that knew them once, know them no more, and the blinds, cunningly hidden by interwoven pine and cedar branches, are replaced by the noisy puff of escaping steam, and the more subdued thud of the mighty pumps, which send the water through miles of pipe to thirsty bipeds of another genus in the towns which lie in the valleys below.

During the late autumn days which I passed in my tent on the shores of one of the largest of the numerous lakes which fleck the bosom of Plymouth with silvery dots, I seemed to live over again the days of old, when I lay in the blind, and eagerly watched the curious flock which swept to and fro, now approaching a little, as if to gratify an insatiable curiosity, and anon receding, as the instinctive cautiousness of the bird caused it to flee from the merest semblance of danger.

By the kindness of Mr. C. C. Wood, the manager of the Plymouth Rock Trout Hatchery, I was enabled to choose my ground to pitch my tent wherever I would, on the long easterly shore of Billington Sea, where he and his brother, the genial Deputy Collector of Customs of this old seaport, control many acres of woods, protecting the entire side of the pond.

My tent was pitched on the side of a hill, in the midst of the woods, protected on three sides from the winds and storms, and with a view toward the west, which commanded the whole expanse of the lake, and stretching away to the crest of the wooded hills which divide this town from those to the west.

Just to my right was a long point forming one side of a little bay, on the extremity of which was a long row of plain board fencing, which in the season is covered with boughs of evergreen trees, and which, when approached from the water-side, effectually masked everything behind it from view.

My companion and camp-mate was a young artist, S. B. Duffield by name, and I want no better one, and any camper knows

that tent life will bring out all the cussedness in a man's nature, but he was always ready and willing, always pleasant, knew how to talk and joke, and a more rare quality still, knew how to keep his mouth shut, on occasion.

This point was a favorite resort of ours, and I miss my guess, if the winter's exhibitions do not show portions of this beautiful spot immortalized in color on canvas.

Here we would paddle in our canoe, and lying beneath the grateful shade of the overhanging trees, drink in the beauties of the glorious and peaceful scene spread out before us.

Let us jump along to the days when the leaves have begun to fall, and the lowery skies and piercing winds give token of the coming of wintry snows and cold. The house is peopled with sturdy men clad in corduroy and canvas, and the racks are filled with heavy 10 guage guns, and the talk is of powder charges and the merits of chilled shot or smokeless powder. Outside, about the blinds, are coops of ducks and geese, while anchored on the water beyond are groups of wooden decoys. An easterly

wind has been blowing heavily for two days, and it has just shifted to southwest.

Geese do not fly in a nasty easterly gale and the flocks that came up from the north just ahead of it, are lying outside in the salt water, waiting for a change. It is a pretty sure sign of bad weather when a big flight of geese is on, but those which pitch into the bays will generally stay there, until there is a change, in spite of the buffeting they get from the turbulent waves.

But when the change comes, off they go, and it is then, when tired and thirsty, they drop into the ponds, that our friends get in their work.

Soon a "honk" is heard from outside, and one or more of the gunners go out and loose the "flyers" who circle out over the pond and back to the shore in front of the blind. A wild volley of hoarse cries goes up from the other geese stationed on the shore, and the flying string of wild birds, attracted by the decoys, circles back and shows signs of stopping for a little chat with these, apparently, earlier arrivals.

But now, from other portions of the pond, goes up the call, for there are other blinds

on the southerly shore, and even on the island that occupies the centre of this sheet of water.

But there is a good strain of decoy birds at Wood's Point, of the real Canada Goose, bred up from wild birds and domesticated for generations, and they get their share of the birds.

"Here they come," says the watcher. "they're down," and sure enough the wild birds are in the water, and headed by an old gander, are slowly swimming in toward the blind. But they are not captured yet. The old gander has evidently been there before, perhaps "many a time," and he is cautious. Slowly he swims back and forth, sometimes beating back the too eager youngsters who would swim directly to their misguiding brethren in the shoal water.

Now is the critical period, and woe betide the unlucky tenderfoot, who in his eagerness to watch the oncoming birds, incautiously allows his head to rise a bit too high or raps the muzzle of his gun on the boards of the blind. If the birds are thereby frightened away, he is lucky if he gets off without a rap on the head from some quick-tempered

gunner, or ducked in the chilly water and hustled off by the disappointed crowd.

But we have no novices here, the men are all at their chosen stations, and the decoys are sending out their most mellifluous and coaxing tones. "Honk-honk-o-o-onk" cry the decoys, "come up here and get some grub. Here is a nice bed of duck weed, and there are lots of nice snails to give it a relish: come up."

"Honk-o-honk," says the leading visitor. "I don't know about it. I don't like the looks of those bushes behind there. Seems to me, I got hurt by something from a place like that, last year, and almost frightened to death by the big noise that came from it."

"Oh! don't be such a coward, come on!" Nearer and nearer draws the bunch of birds and wilder and more urgent is the call of the decoys, till they come in range, when "give it to 'em," and a volley of fire, smoke and hurtling lead goes out from the portholes, and then upon his feet goes every man, and another volley crashes into the now frightened and wildly fleeing birds, who are hurrying away at the top of their speed.

The dead birds are picked up, the cripples killed or captured to be used in improving the strain of the flock of decoys, and the blind once more settles down to its former comparative quiet.

But the day of goose-shooting in this section of the country is passing away. In spite of protective laws, the birds are getting scarcer every year. The advance of civilization is peopling the shores of our ponds with houses, and the demands of the waterworks are setting up disturbances that are gradually driving away the game from our shores. Some day, we will be sitting by the fire, with our grandchild on our knee, telling him of sights and exploits, which he will never see, unless he goes to those portions of the country, not yet contaminated by the accursed hustle for greed of gain, and the too rapidly increasing communistic huddling of our people into manufacturing towns, about the streams and lakes, to the desolation and desertion of the farming districts. The home-loving, law-abiding, and contented tiller of the soil who once laid in these blinds, or shot over the adjacent fields, will have given way to the gamin, and the sparrow

shooting Italian, and will gradually lose himself in the crowd, or like the birds wend his way to more civilized districts, where the air is not befouled by sewer gas and factory stenches.

PERCH FISHING.



By the Author

ROOT POND, PLYMOUTH, MASS.

PERCH FISHING.

HE was just a boy, (plain boy,) freckle-faced, red-headed, a trifle uncouth, but not by any means awkward, except when he was in a strange house.

My first sight of him was as he sat on the stringer of the bridge, over the river, dangling a line in the water, and occasionally pulling up a bull pout, which he slung behind him on the planks.

Leaning on the rail was a 12 guage gun with a brace of woodcock hanging on the guard.

“Changed off from shooting and gone to fishing?” queried I.

“Yep, didn’t have much luck shootin’, and I wanted somethin’ for breakfast, so I thought I’d ketch a few hornpouts.”

This was the beginning of as much of a companionship as will exist between a man of forty and a boy of sixteen, and many

were the trips we took that fall and winter for partridge, quail and rabbits.

He was a veritable vagabond, so far as love for roaming around the woods was concerned, and I soon found that he was a mine of knowledge of the manners and ways of the wearers of fur, fin and feather.

He had the run of my library during the winter, and while he passed by story books in disdain, he spent long hours on stormy days over the volumes relating to Natural History and field sports.

One day in May he trotted his pony up beside me as I was going home to tea and called out,

“Say, uncle Mat, les’ go fishing.’ Got all done plantin’, and its going to be showery tomorrer. Les’ go up to the pond and ketch a mess of perch ; may get a pick’rel. Come on, will yer.”

“Why Bob,” I said, “we have no boat, and there’s no place at the pond to fish off the shore.”

“Got a boat, all right, Curtis and Thayer had my canoe up there last week, after pick’rel, and I told ’em to leave it in the ice house. Come on. Curtis got a old he

one, weighed most six pound ; mebbe we'll get one. We'll get some perch anyhow."

"All right," said I, "call around about daylight and I'll be ready."

The boy was on hand, at daylight, and we were soon in his old jump-seat buggy, with bait, rods, and lunch stowed under the seat, bound for the pond.

The fresh morning air, redolent of blossom and leaf, was like a tonic to his boyish spirits and he kept up a string of small talk all the way to where we were to leave the team, in a friendly stable not far from the shore.

"Say, boss, did you ever go troutin'?" Bob often gets irreverent, and calls me boss, especially when he is happy.

"Go trouting, yes ; why?"

"Well, I went up to New Hampshire last year, up to Uncle Bill's, and on the train were two dudes, with fancy fish poles, and baskets to put fish in, and pocket-books full of hooks, all trimmed up with feathers. Them fish poles were dandies though. So, when I got there, I told Uncle Bill about it, and he said they were goin' troutin' ; that they used them feather fixins instead of worms, and that they called 'em flies. Well,

I thought if there was so much fun in ketchin' trout es that, I must try it, and Uncle Bill put me onto a good brook, and I had fun alive for about two hours. But I used worms for bait, and I cut a pole in the woods. They were little things, but they fought like a sucker. Did you ever see them flies?"

"O, yes, often, and there is just as much difference in catching fish with a fly instead of a worm, as there is between killing a bird on the wing instead of sitting still."

"Well, by gum, I can get shots enough at birds on the wing, without potting them, and have more fun out of it. But I dunno, if I was a bird, I would as 'lieves be shot dead on a limb, as to be scairt most to death on the wing. But 'bout them trout, I got awful sick of 'em, after I had 'bout a dozen messes."

"Well, Bob, to be honest, I would rather have a nice perch, caught out of cool, clear water, than to have the best trout that I ever saw. It is mostly because it is the fashion to praise the flavor of the trout, and to decry the value of other fish for food, but there is no fish that swims that so palls on

the appetite as those same trout, or any other of the salmon family."

"There is a great difference, however, in the flavor of perch. They are the finest, when they are full of spawn, but I think a man is pretty mean, who will catch fish when they are breeding. Again perch, caught out of muddy ponds and rivers are not as nice flavored as those out of nice, cold, clear water; in fact no fish is."

"Say," says Bob, "you know I borrowed those pages you cut out of Forest and Stream, last winter, and read those stories that Fred Mather wrote about the fellers he'd fished with. Golly, that chap knows what he's talking about. But I shouldn't think he'd had time to do anything but go fishing, if he's fished with all those chaps. He's one of those dude fishermen, that want to break your head for calling his rod a fish pole; and he talks about 'coachmen,' 'hackles' and 'professors' and calls worms 'barn yard hackles,' but he can tell a story in good shape. Say didn't I laugh over that letter he wrote you about boys killing birds; he's a dandy."

"What was that, Bob? I have so many

letters from him that I do not remember the one you speak of."

"Hold on, boss, I cut it out of the paper where you printed it, and I carry it in my pocket. Here 'tis."

Brooklyn, N. Y., Aug. 23, 1897.

My dear Bates :

I have yours of 18th in reference to insectivorous birds being killed as game, on account of the benefit to agriculture rendered by them, and the danger of their being exterminated, or driven from the settled portions of the country. In my opinion, nothing will save our birds from slaughter. You may educate all the adult sportsmen, gunners, et al., to spare certain birds but you can't educate that savage whom we call a boy. Give him a gun and he only wants to see something to kill; that's what he is out for, and as for expecting him to pass a bird as big as a meadow lark, or a "high hole" you might as well save your breath. It is boys, boys, boys, who kill off the insectivorous birds, robins, thrushes and others which are not game, and as a boy I did more than my share of it. In one of my sketches of early life, now running in *Forest and Stream*, I relate the killing of a "yellow bird" at ten paces while it was feeding on a thistle top, and how I exulted at my prowess and then

suggest that if some kind-hearted man had massaged me with his boot it would have taught me that life should be taken with due care and judgment, and that a boy should not have a gun until he is 90 years old and then his grandfather should advise him to go forth and kill every living thing he sees. That would protect much game. Few men are fit to be trusted with a gun, but a boy should never have one.

Cordially yours,

FRED MATHER.

“Yes, Bob, and there is a great deal more in those lines than you see now, but you will understand better when you get older. Major Mather is best known as a fisherman and is a noted fish-culturist, but he has not passed sixty-five years, without getting a grasp on nature, that few get, who do not, as he does, pass many days in the woods. That letter has a big moral and it applies not only to the gun but to the rod; and not only to trout, but to perch. I wish every man, who has a boy, could read that.”

“Yes I sponse so,” replied Bob “and he says perch will bite at a fly, and its good fun if you have a light rod. I guess that’s so, for I had lots more fun ketchin’ that big

pick'rel with your little pole, that you lent me last fall, than I used to with a big one that I cut in the woods, but I dunno what the fish think about it. I guess I druther be yanked out and have it over if I was a fish."

"Well, Bob, we seldom think now how the fish and birds feel about it. But here we are at the pond, and here is your canoe. Now where shall we fish?"

"Well, I guess we'd better go out there off the point; there is some deep water just outside those lily pads, and there's lots of perch there, and p'raps I can get a pick'rel out of the weeds. Golly, I'd like to see you get a big pick'rel on that little pole of yours, it don't look bigger'n a weed. Say, what are you goin' to do with that other pole?"

"Well, Bob, that rod is for you, but I don't want to hear you call it a fish pole, and I want to teach you not to 'yank'em out;' for I am going to take you with me some time, and let you catch a Black Bass, and you have got to learn to play a fish, before you can land one of those fellows."

"Now that rod did not cost much, and it will break if you yank too hard, I would not risk it on a big bass, but it will do to learn on."

Here is a reel and a braided silk line, and these hooks are tied on gut snells. You would better commence to fish right now, and when you get after more gamey fish, you will find it second nature."

"Say Uncle Mat, you're a brick. Say, I'm one of those dude fishermen now. Say, if anybody says you're not all right. I—I'll get him out in this canoe and tip him over."

"Well Bob, see who'll get the first perch."

Just off the shore, where the water from the inlet, came around on its way to the lower end of the pond, we threw over the anchor and dropped our hooks, baited with earth worms, and then laid back and waited.

Am I lazy? Well perhaps, but I love (occasionally) to sit in the end of a boat, floating in the still waters, and watch the clouds roll by, the leaves tremble in the breeze and the ripples playing tag on the shallows. Every one seems to have a strain of wild blood in his veins, a heritage of his primeval ancestors; and when these wild corpuscles come on top, he is not contented till he hies himself to the woodland and plays lazy till the fit is off and he sighs for the hurly-burly of civilization.

I love to hold the butt of a little fly-rod and cast the pretty delusions of hook and gaudy feather, taking care to drop the flies lightly as the real insect would dip his feet in the water and delude the poor fish into thinking that he has a toothsome morsel for his appetite. I love to feel the thrill, that telegraphs itself along the braided line and limber rod to the hand, when the trout or bass seizes the line and darts off with his prey only to find himself a victim of misplaced confidence and fastened to a bending, springing rod which with every jerk, forces the cruel barb deeper into his jaw. I love to see the lordly bass leap from the water and shake the line, fastened to his lip, with a grim exhibition of anger, which culminates in the wild rush for liberty, only to finally lay his form in the landing net, while the wild blood rushes through my veins in the cruel exultation of mastery by skill and science over the wilder animal before me and I often wish, after his form lies in the bottom of the canoe, that he was back in the water in the glory of health and activity.

But I also love to lie quietly in the seat and watch the bobbing float and almost wish

that the fish had not pulled it under to disturb my reveries in the calm still surroundings of water and wood. Am I lazy? Well I guess so. But there are others.

Bob interrupted my soliloquy, with a good fat perch, which he took in over the side and then plunged into the fish bag which hung in the water.

“Say, it’s lots more fun to ketch fish with this rod than it is with a birch pole. Golly, how that perch pulled. When do these fellows spawn?”

“They lay their eggs in the spring, about the time the herring run. The time varies with the locality, say from April to May, when the temperature of the water gets to about 50 to 55 degrees. Did you never see the strings of eggs hanging on the bushes when the water fell after the spring freshet?”

“Well,” says Bob, “I have seen them, but I never knew what they were before. I pulled a lot off the button bushes last spring and dropped them in the water ’cause I thought they were fish eggs and it was a pity to have them dry up.”

Just then the fish commenced to bite and

the steady stream of fish coming in over the side interrupted the conversation, till with a sigh, Bob broke out with :

“Well, I spose we better quit, we have all we can use, and I think it is mighty hoggish to ketch fish to throw them away. I have seen fellers pull in a big lot of fish, over a hundred, and tell what a lot they got, and then throw them into the hen yard, or leave them on the shore. That’s what your friend George Shields calls a ‘fish hog.’ Say, he don’t do a thing to them fish hogs, in that book of his.”

“Which book, Bob? He has written a good many.”

“O that magazine you have every month. ‘Recreation,’ he calls it. He everlastingly soaks it to the chaps what pulls in more fish than he thinks is their share. But we might as well go home now.”

“Yes, Bob, you see the best men in the country are trying to keep up the supply of game and restock old depleted streams and covers. Now see that you do not help to undo their work.”

And one more pleasant day was marked with a white stone on life’s calendar.

A TALE OF
WINNEPESAUKEE.

A TALE OF WINNEPESAUKEE.

IT was a warm summer night. The mist hung heavy over the lake, and the clouds drooped low over the mountain tops. All nature seemed steeped in a restless heavy fog. Sleep was banished from my eyes as I tossed on the clammy sheets.

Despairing of repose, I left my room and wandered along the shore, and finally threw myself on a bed of fragrant leaves, beneath the boughs of a wide spreading pine. The flash of distant lightning lit the horizon, and the growling of far off thunder disturbed the stillness of the air. Anon the lapping of the restless waters of the lake, broke upon the ear, and the hoarse cry of the night bird grated through the trees.

The very loneliness of the scene was oppressive, and I lay with pent up breath, striving to quell the very beating of my heart which throbbed in hurried strokes.

Like the twittering of distant birds, disturbed by a loathsome serpent, came the murmurings of a voice, growing stronger and more distinct, till I could hear a voice which seemed to say : “ Shall I tell you a story of the early days, when these hills were spotted with a crimson stain, and the waters ran red with blood ? Then listen to the tale of one who once cleft these waters with restless paddle, and roamed these shores with spear and bow.”

AND THUS HE SPOKE :

The afternoon of a beautiful October day was drawing to a close ; the sun was already sinking behind the mountain-tops and the shadows were slowly creeping up the slopes of Ossipee. The lake, always beautiful, was taking on those delicate darkening tints as the shadows of the forest are thrown upon it and with every moment it grew more and more beautiful as the shadows deepened.

On the southern shore, at the head of a little bay which indented the border, embosomed on the sides by the forest which stretched away in miles of trackless wilderness, was a cluster of Indian wigwams, the

home of a band of the Winnepesaukees. Among their tents was one distinguished from the others by its superior size, the emblems of authority painted upon its curtains, and inside, by the mass of beautiful skins which covered the earth.

It was the home of the old chief, and he was now slowly passing from earth to the Happy Land of the Beyond. His massive frame, only a wreck of its former self, stretched upon the bear skins, the hickory bow, six feet in length and of a size calculated to withstand the efforts of anything but a giant to draw its arrow to the head, told a story of the prowess of the owner. By his side, with her face buried in her hands and her hair dishevelled, crouched a young girl; and without the curtain stood a youth six feet four inches tall and a perfect athlete in form and figure, gazing off over the bosom of the lake before him. At a word from the girl the young man entered and stood by them. The old Chief, with the damp of death already upon his brow, lifted his mighty form upon his elbow and spoke,—

“My son, the race of the chief of the Winnepesaukees is nearly run. No more will he

breast the side of the mountain in chase of the deer or climb through yonder ravines to lay the skin of the bear upon his bed. The sun is setting and when it disappears behind the top of the mountains the spirit of Winnetonka will join his friends upon the other side. But just now the spirits of my forefathers came to me as in the days of my youth and they bring sad tidings of our tribe. But a short time will you rule over them, for the invader will close in about you and the remnant of your people will be forced to seek another home. You and you only can bend the bow and wield the axe of your Father and Chief. Many times have they been used in mortal combat; but they have never been dishonored. Promise me that you will bear them with honor and that you will repel the foot of the enemy as long as a drop of blood runs in your veins. Even now they appear and you will soon be called. Away! and meet them face to face!" He fell back and all was over.

A few miles away, down the lake, a war party of Mohawks were approaching, headed by their chief, who, accompanied by his son, was looking for the beautiful lake of which

he had so often heard. They broke through the bushes at the edge of the forest and stood upon the shore. The last expiring rays of the setting sun were gilding the mountain tops, and, as he gazed upon the scene before him he said:—"Beautiful indeed!"

Yes, beautiful; even to the eyes of the savage who was so soon to color the water with the crimson stain of human blood.

The next day the two tribes met in deadly conflict and the stalwart form of the young Winnepesaukee, towering above his warriors, was picked out by the Mohawk chief as a foe worthy of his prowess; but he had met his fate; that night his body lay in the water of the lake levelled by the axe of the young chief.

Thus were two young men, both in the prime of youth, and both models of physical strength and suppleness left to combat each other. Each seeking the other, the one to revenge the death of his father, the other to destroy the invader of his home; but they were kept apart until the natives of the soil were nearly exterminated. At last, in the heat of the fight they met, and

despite the prowess of his antagonist the Mohawk was the victor, and the young chief left upon the ground for dead.

The faithful sister, who had clung to him through all misfortune, sought him out and found him just in time to hear his last words :—

“The son of Winnetonka has kept his promise. The bow of his Father is broken and the Winnepesaukee will seek a home among the tribes of the North. Promise me, my sister, the last of my race, that you will revenge my death if ever the opportunity is afforded;” and as she promised, his spirit passed to its long home.

Several years passed on ; the maiden, who had been captured by the Mohawks, and adopted as one of the tribe, had grown to a beautiful woman. One day as she was crossing the lake in a canoe a squall arose and her strength proving insufficient to withstand the power of the gale, the craft upset and she was thrown into the surging water. But not thus was the race of the Winnepesaukees to disappear from the land. The young chief, who had often admired the girl, was fishing within the cove and saw the accident. His

arm was strong enough to encounter the blast and she soon lay in the bottom of his canoe which was being driven toward an island near at hand.

After reaching the shore, the young chief stood near with folded arms, gazing at the beautiful girl whom he had just rescued from the hungry water which seemed now lashing itself into a fury at the loss of its victim.

Many times had he gazed upon her form as she mingled with the other maidens of his tribe, among whom she was conspicuous from her pleasing face and willowy grace. This attention had not been unnoticed by the young girl and she was in a measure prepared for the words which at last fell from his lips,—

“The sapling rising from the soil in the midst of the forest, longs for the light of the sun, and as it grows older and more thrifty it towers and climbs until it is warmed by the welcome rays, when it takes on a new life and its leaves grow fresher by the contact; so has Lone Wolf longed for the sunny face of one who would be his companion. His wigwam is empty and he waits for a maiden to cheer its gloomy interior, brighten

the firelight and make a happy home-coming for its owner. Will 'The West Wind' share my lot?"

The maiden stood irresolute for a moment for she was obliged to confess herself not indifferent to the regard of the young chief. His kindness to his people; his just and honorable dealings with all who came before him; his acknowledged prowess in the chase and in the battle and his manly form and beauty had rendered him a hero in the eyes of the maidens of his tribe, any of whom would have felt flattered if these words had been addressed to them. But the mind of the girl was torn between the remembrance that the slayer of her brother and the conqueror of her people stood before her, and the regard and admiration in which she held him. At last she spoke,—

"Lone Wolf is the chief of his tribe, and he can command whatsoever he chooses of the members thereof. The West Wind is the daughter of the Winnepesaukees and only one of his band by the sufferance of her good adopted mother. Her brother died at her feet slain by the hand of the man who now seeks to make her his wife. Before he

died he made her promise that she would revenge his death. Does Lone Wolf suppose that she has forgotten?"

"I did not know that the West Wind was the daughter of Winnetonka," said he, "but I cannot see that this fact should stand between us. Your brother was a brave man and an honorable enemy. He was the slayer of my father. He was my opponent on the field of battle. We met; he was vanquished. It was his fate or it would not have been. I did seek for him and he for me and when we met I felt that I had met a man.

I did seek to avenge a father's death; but the spirit of my father has spoken with me and told me that vengeance is wrong. I do not understand; but my father was a wise man. He told me to cease war and unite all the Indians under one tribe; but I did not know that it was by uniting with another tribe. I see that it is well.

Our tribes have been enemies, let us join them by being united; bury all ill feelings beneath a dead past. The lazy black bird lays its eggs in the nest of the little yellow bird and when hatched the interloper pushes out the young of the true owners.

Do they then destroy him? No! They cherish and nourish him as their own until he is able to take care of himself. Shall we not do as much and forgive those who have unknowingly wronged us?"

"The Lone Wolf is wise and has spoken well," said the maiden as she lifted her eyes to his, "and she knows that her brother has withdrawn his enmity toward the Mohawk, for his spirit has ceased to influence her to hatred of his slayer and has caused her to look upon him with favoring eyes. The West Wind is proud to have been chosen by Lone Wolf and will be a true wife to him and will try to cheer his wigwam."

Thus was the last of the Winnepesaukees merged into the stronger nation. Many years did Lone Wolf live to teach the spirit of peace and good will to his people; until when the white man was first stretching forth over the country, all was prosperity.

When at last the old chief lay upon his death-bed, he thus prophesied of the future of his tribe: "Lone Wolf has followed his last trail. No more will he sit in council with his tribe, and no more will his canoe skim over the waters of the lake. The white

man's foot has been planted in our midst, and it will soon crowd out the red man from these scenes; but the name of the Mohawk shall live forever. When we are nearly forgotten, and the boat of the white man shall float where now is my canoe, I will appear to him and make known my face and he shall set its likeness in front, where it can gaze over these hills and waters, and shall carry my name and face to all who meet him."

The Winnepesaukee and Mohawk are no more; for long years they have lain beneath the sod. The waters of the beautiful lake still lie embosomed in the shadows of the hills and forest, and the prophecy of the chief is fulfilled, for the white man's boat, the "Mohawk" now floats upon its bosom and bears at its prow the protytype of the old chieftain, where it can look over the scenes where he once taught the principles of peace and happiness.

The steamer Mohawk, Dr. H. F. Libby, owner, bears on its front a bas relief of a Mohawk Indian, cast in bronze.

HORN-POUT
FISHING.

HORN-POUT FISHING.

SOME time ago I introduced you to boy Bob, and some of you were glad to meet him. Yes, Bob is a character, he's honest, and has never learned much of the art of politeness, so he often says things about people and things that seem rude, but he does not mean it to be so, it's simply that he has not yet learned to be a hypocrite, and says what he thinks.

Bob was sitting curled up in the big easy chair in my den one day, which he had got in the habit of doing, when he was not busy elsewhere, and had been reading a copy of the *Amateur Sportsman*. I was busy writing and had not noticed that he was looking at me, 'till I felt him.

It's funny how you can feel anyone looking at you, I think it must be the result of the sixth sense in man. I have often lain hidden in the woods and noticed that an animal that I was watching intently would get uneasy

and finally disappear as if he knew he was being watched. I finally looked up and said, "Well, Bob, what is it?"

Bob grinned, as if he appreciated the situation and broke out with, "Say, Uncle Mat, you know Gammons?"

"What Gammons, the Eastern manager of the Boots and Shoes Weekly?"

"Oh pshaw, there's only one Gammons. I mean Wendall Gammons, has suthin to do with this paper I been readin'. You said that it made a man fat to be jolly. Well, he's jolly, all right, and fat too; golly, he'd roll either way. Told me some stories the other day 'bout his goin' fishin' when he was a boy. He come along, when I was layin' down on the stringer of the dam, watchin' the frost fish, and he set down and we got to talkin' 'bout boys and what they did when he was young. He said:

"That was a good while ago, Bob. I was a tender hearted boy in those days, and my first fish seemed to be about the biggest that ever happened. It was a horn-pout, a horn-pout with lively horns, and the fish might have weighed half a pound. I might tell you, Bob, that it weighed half a pound and

you would believe it. I might tell you it weighed two pounds, and you might believe that. But, Robert, my boy, always tell the truth when you have got anything to say about fishing. Fish story liars may get into heaven all right, but they are becoming so numerous as to become almost obnoxious, and I wouldn't for the world have you accuse me of prevaricating.

“But about the fish. I landed him with a birch stick and a piece of twine, one summer morning while fishing in the Shoestring pond at South Carver, Mass. I had heard an older brother say something about horn-pouts and from the painful sensation that I experienced in removing that fish from the hook, I determined at once that it was a horn-pout—and it was.

“Horn-pouts are very intelligent. In fact, Bob, they are the most intelligent fish that ever grew from little eggs—and this one for intelligence beat them all. To make a long story short, I kept that fish and educated it. I called him Bill because all fish are fond of water, and all the Bills I had ever known were not fish.

“When Bill got so he could almost talk, people came from miles around to see him. Talk about knowing things, that Bill was an encyclopedia. He knew more than enough and finally like some men, got so much knowledge that it killed him.

“There used to be a nice little lady next door to where we lived, that I used to think a good deal of—and another little lady—not quite so nice—in another part of the town, that I used to like pretty well. They both liked Bill, and both of them imagined that they had a cinch upon my affections. Now mind you, I don’t say Bill got to telling tales about me, but somehow those two little ladies found out that I was a cruel, heartless flirt, and the result was that we all quarrelled. I blamed Bill for the whole business. There wasn’t any funeral, but Bill was dead enough when I got through with him. There is such a thing as knowing too much.”

“I was so tickled over that yarn that I went home and wrote it down just as nigh the way he said it as I could. He’s a funny chap, keep a feller laughin’ all the time. I’d like to go fishin’ with Gammons. He’d make bully ballast for that canoe o’ yourn. Say,



Photo by L. F. Bosworth.

CLEANING THE CATCH.

'member the first time I saw you? I was down on the bridge, ketchin' horn-pouts."

"Yes. Why."

"Well I was thinkin' I'd like a mess, they must be gettin' ready to bite pretty quick. Don't you want'er go?"

"I don't know, Bob, I don't care much for that sort of fishing, and the mosquitoes are biting pretty well too. I don't care to be eaten by mosquitoes for a few muddy horn-pouts. They're not worth it."

"I don't see why you are so set 'gainst horn-pouts. I druther have them than perch, and it's just as much fun ketchin' 'em."

"Well, Bob, you can have your choice, but I prefer the perch to any fresh water fish that swims. I have eaten pouts caught from cold waters in the sandy lands, that were pretty good, but those from these muddy bottomed rivers are a little too rank for my taste."

"Oh, I know they are not so good as some fish, but they smell fishy, and I ha'int been fishin' but once since last fall. Come on, please do."

So I went, more to hear what Bob had to say about horn-pouts than for any other rea-

son, for Bob always discoursed on the family affairs of his game. I had plentifully supplied myself with tobacco and "punkie-dope" determined to give the insect pests a tussle for their supper.

We sat ourselves on an old stonewall, that ended in the river, threaded a generous worm on our hooks and waited. Only the deep tones of the frogs and the peeping of nocturnal insects, occasionally broken by the call of some farmer belated at his milking, broke the stillness and I began to get a little dreamy when Bob ejaculated "Dot rot these skeeters, lend me that bottle of stuff you put on your face, will you? Say, this makes me think of Ed. Curtis. He said the mosquitoes were so thick down south during the war that they stretched him out pullin' at both ends. Considering he's 6 ft. 4 now, he could have let himself to Barnum if the rebs hadn't surrendered for another year or two. Say, did you ever see an ole horn-pout with a school of young'uns. Well I found one in a "slew" and watched 'em for a week and she acted just like a hen with a brood of chickens. Gee, I got a whale."

Bob had got a little high toned since I got him a rod, and had eschewed his old birch pole, and a good sized pout can pull pretty well on a light rod. He pulled in a fish which weighed perhaps half a pound.

“Gemini, I thought I had a big one on then. What a diff”—it makes using this little rod. Gosh, I got it that time. He stuck his horn in me about a foot and he’s swallowed the hook. Well I got to go up to the fire.”

We had built a fire about fifty feet behind us to attract the mosquitoes and furnish light to extract the swallowed hooks. By the time Bob was back I had a fish and told him to take it off, as he had his hand in.

“Gee,” says Bob, “I think the fish had it into my hand instead. Its easy to get ’em off. Take hold of the sides with your fingers, right side of his fins, and press the horn on his back down with yer hand and squeeze hard. Then he can’t ‘horn’ yer. Sometimes he’ll do it though, spite of it. Wal’ I’ll try it again now. Say, boss, how big a pout did you ever see?”

“Oh, two pounds and a half is a pretty big pout, I never saw many as big as that and none as big as that in these waters, but

Goode says they sometimes weigh three or four pounds. Some of their relatives, the catfish, grow to enormous size. The Mississippi cat has been taken weighing one hundred and fifty pounds."

"Gee-whiz, I wouldn't like to get one o' them fellers on a rod. T'would take a clothes line to hold him. By jiminy, what a fish. Say, are there very many that size?"

"No probably not, for a western man told me he fished a week for a big one and did not get a bite."

"Wal', are them big fellers good for any thing after you get 'em?"

"He said he had a slice off of one that weighed about thirty pounds, and it tasted much like rancid wheel grease; but many species of cats are good eating. The blue cat of the southern streams is celebrated for its delicate flavor; but then, you know, "there is a difference in taste," as the old woman said when she kissed the cow."

"Oh! horn-pouts are good eatin'; they're sweet when they're fresh caught and there ain't so many bones in 'em as there is in a perch. Gammons was tellin' 'bout a man in Carver, who had a big mouth. When he eat

herrin', he'd put 'em in one corner and the bones came out of the other side as the meat went down his throat, but yer don't need that kind of a hopper for pouts. "Say, did you ever "jug" fish.

Now, of course I had read about "jugging" for cats in the west, but I have found that you must not know too much if you want to draw Bob out, so I dissembled.

"I have heard of it, Bob, but never tried it, did you?"

"Yep! I read about it in a book, and when my cousin came down from New Hampshire, we got to talkin' about it, and we thought we would try it. So we got about three dozen old bottles, and went up to the pond; and we tied a hook and line on the neck of each bottle, and put 'em in the boat and rowed over where the water was not very deep and put 'em out in a string about sixty rod long and then set and waited. Pretty soon we saw one bob up and down and we rowed over and picked it up. Well we chased it 'bout five minutes before we got hold of it, and finally pulled in a perch.

When we got him in we looked for the rest and they was agoin' in all directions.

Whew ! didn't we hustle, we didn't have time to bait many of 'em over again. So we chucked 'em right into the bottom of the boat, bottles and all, just as we picked 'em up. We got one eel, and he so everlastin'ly snarled things up, that it took an hour to untangle the lines.

“Wal ! I had one big bottle, that would hold 'bout two quarts, and I put a big hook and a live minner on that one, and when I took 'count of stock, I couldn't find that one at all. Well, we rowed 'round a long time and could not see it. So I come the 'Injun' on it, and saw it 'bout a hundred rods off bobbin' like jehu.”

“Hold on, Bob, what is coming the 'Injun' on it?”

“Why ! don't you know ?” queried Bob. “When you drop a little thing on the floor and can't find it, jest lay down and look all 'round and you can see it stickin' up. So I got my head down next the water and looked along the surface. That's what the boys call 'looking Injun.' ”

“Well, when we see it, we went over, and just as I reached out for it, it went down and out of sight. Well, I nearly went over-

board, I was so 'stonished. We chased it a long time, and I finally got hold of it with an oar, and pulled it in, and it had a big pick'rel on it, that weighed over two pounds. Most of the fish was pouts and perch though. Well, it was lots of fun, but a good deal like work if your boat is heavy as our'n was."

All this time that Bob was chatting away, we had been pulling in the ungainly creatures, flattened like a miller's thumb, and bearded like a billy-goat. I don't know of a homelier fish than a horn-pout. There are neither graceful lines nor pretty colors. They look as if their ancestors had their heads squat down by some enormous thumb and finger, and the black back, fading out into the white of the belly, is anything but pretty. All these things go to show their habit.

How wonderfully does nature provide for her children, to protect them from their enemies, and adapt their form to their mode of life. Even this homely fish furnishes a beautiful lesson in evolution. The sluggish, bottom feeding habit has flattened its head and set the mouth low down nearly on a level with the belly; the numerous feelers, or bar-

bels, furnish means of discovering their food in the muddy water; and the black color of the back, of the same hue as the mud on which they lie, protects them from the attacks of their enemies; while the belly, lying next the mud, and not exposed to view, has turned to the neutral white or gray.

“Well,” says Bob, “I think the skeeters are pretty thick, to make a lecture on Natural History real interestin,’ I move we adjourn. Gee! Whiz! I guess there ain’t been anybody here this year. Leastwise, these skeeters is mighty hungry. Le’s git!” and we got.

On the way home, I told Bob of the efforts to introduce the catfish into Europe and Punch’s poetic protest, ending with

“They say the catfish climbs the trees
And robs the roosts, and, down the breeze
Prolongs his catterwaul.
Ah, leave him in his western flood,
Where Mississippi churns the mud,
Don’t bring him here at all!”

THE FOX WE DID NOT GET.





Photo. by C. M. Emerson.

WATCHING A RUNWAY.

THE FOX WE DID NOT GET.

HIGH up on a ridge, girt about with forests, which stretch away in silent majesty to the place where they fade away into the horizon, sits a long, low house, known in the vicinity as "The Hunter's Camp," the resort of a jolly band of hunters, who come from the cities miles away, to throw off the cares of business, and breathe in the health-giving air, redolent with the odors of spruce and fir. Four miles to the nearest store, and only three little farm houses in sight across miles of country.

The owner is the jolliest fellow of the lot, and if we were to tell his name, it would be recognized at once by many of the sportsmen and naturalists who read these columns.

This is the scene of our story.

A little party of sportsmen were sitting around the fire after supper one night in December, and, as usual, were relating reminiscences of former hunts, when the

talk drifted toward foxes, and fox-hunting, by Will coming in from out-doors and saying :

“Say boys, it is snowing a little, but I don’t think it will last long, and if we get about an inch on the ground, it will be good tracking tomorrow. What do you say to getting up about three o’clock and going over to Line Hill?

There was an expression of assent from all, the only objection being from Harry, who did not want to get up early.

“Do you want to see a fox?” says Will.

“Of course I do. But what’s the use of turning out the night before?”

“Well, if you want to see a fox, you will get over to the stand by daylight, or it will be noon before we get one there, and we may not then. The scent lies stronger in the morning, and you want to get out, before the sun dries it up.

“Yes,” says Harry, “but don’t the foxes wander around in the day time?”

“Not much, down here. They generally get up on a side hill, soon after daylight, and lie down for the day. You see, they are out hunting all night, after mice and

rabbits, and by daylight they commence to lay up for the day."

"I thought they lived in burrows, in the ground."

"So they do, but except in the breeding season, they do not hole up much, unless they are wounded, or are run too hard by the dogs."

"Ned Brown, an old fox hunter out in Newton, tells a story," says another of the party, "that is a pretty good illustration of how a fox will act, when he is hard pressed, and how a good dog will hold on to them."

Herbert Baird and a friend were hunting foxes one day, with three dogs, and they were on a trail. But, by and by, two dogs came back to them. The missing dog was an old favorite, and Baird, knowing his habits, said: "That dog is holed up somewhere with a fox."

They hunted until night to find him, with no success, and the next morning, they loaded digging tools into the wagon, and went where they lost him. They hunted for a long time, and finally met a native, who told them that he had seen a burrow that looked as if the dogs had been digging at it

very lately; and he conducted them to the spot.

“There,” says Baird, “my dog is in there.”

“O, pshaw!” says his friend, “I don’t believe he ever got into that hole; why it is all stopped up.”

“Yes,” replied Baird, “that dog would never give up as long as the fox was ahead of him. He has dug in after the fox, the other dogs have buried him in, and he can’t get out. I am going to open the hole anyway.”

They started to dig, and continued till dark, then procured lanterns, and kept on till about 11 o’clock, when they got to the end of the burrow, and found the dog and the dead fox with him. He had been buried for 27 hours, and was lively and well when taken out.

The men had taken a bottle of spirits to revive the dog, if they found him exhausted, but they needed the restorative more than the dog did.

“That’s a pretty big dog story,” says Will, “but I see no reason to doubt it. A good dog will hold onto a trail wonderfully.

They will run till they are so completely exhausted that they will lie down right on the tracks. I have known dogs to run so hard as to kill themselves."

"Say," says Harry, "does every fox have a burrow of its own?"

"O, no! a bitch fox will throw 3 to 5 pups, and I have heard of a lot of 23 pups being taken out of one hole. There are often two or three litters together. But we must turn in if we are going to get up early."

"Bur-r-r-r, Ting-g-g-g," went the alarm clock next morning, and a frowsy head was poked out from under the blankets, and yawns from the other room scared the rats from their homes under the attic floor of the old house.

"What time is it?" says Harry.

"Half past three, and if we are going to start a fox today, we had better be getting out of this."

"Well, I would like to get a fox, but I don't want one bad enough to get up in the middle of the night to shoot it. Call me when breakfast is ready." And a snort and then a snore arose from the blankets.

Heavens, how that young fellow could snore. Starting from a low murmur, as of pumpkins rolling out of a tip cart, the sound would creep up, rising in volume and increasing in pitch till the rafters echoed with the sound, and the dogs would whine from their kennels in the barn, till a gasp and a snort closed the performance, only to rise again and flood the air. I pity his wife, if he ever gets one.

The stove clatters, and soon the snapping of the fire fills the kitchen, and Will rolls out of the bedroom, with eyes blinking in a vain effort to keep open.

“What’s the weather?”

“Foggy and not very cold, but the snow we had last night is in complete condition for tracking.”

Will goes out to interview the weather man, and by the time he returns, the coffee is on, and the ham sizzling in the pan.

“Well,” he says as he comes in, “if this day had been made to order, it could not have been better. Where is Harry?”

“Snoring; told me to call him when breakfast was ready. Guess I’ll blow the horn.”

A couple of shells are slipped into one of the guns standing in the rack, and with stealthy footsteps, a form glides into the other room, where a confused heap of blankets, alone indicates the sleeping form. A window is quietly raised and "bang, bang," the air shakes with the concussion.

"Hi, there, there's a big fox going up over the hill by you like blazes, go for him."

"Wha', wha', what's the matter," as a dishevelled head and frightened eyes surmounting a thinly clad form appears in the bed.

"Get up there, the foxes will eat the boots off your feet if you don't move round faster. Get up there! Get up!"

* * * *

An hour later, three forms, clad in shooting jackets and carrying guns, tramp over the light snow, which covers the ground, and a dog cavorting in frisky anticipation, dances ahead of the party, as it plods almost sullenly along in the semi-darkness of the winter's morning.

"Now," says Will, "if you fellows will get up to the stands on the hill, I will take the

dog down into the pines, and see what we can find."

As the solitary hunters, holding their places in the twilight of the gathering dawn, pace to and fro, or seek a shelter in the lee of the nearest tree or pile of rocks, the first glow of the rising sun gilds the clouds floating above the mist which covers the earth, and the clarion voice of the awakening cock, from a distant farm-yard comes faintly to the ear. In the silence, almost deathlike, broken only by the sough of the wind among the junipers which dot the hill, they wait the eager bay of the hound, which will denote the starting of the fox, but they wait in vain.

"What can be the matter? Why under the sun, don't that dog start something?" they muse as they closely scan the sides of the hill, over which they hope to see the ruddy coat of Sir Reynard, trotting along toward a sudden surprise. But not a sound of bark or bay disturbs the air.

From the far distance, on the other side of the valley, comes the sound of two hounds in full cry, but their quarry is not for us. From the other side the hill, the bark of the house dog on the highway momentarily

attracts the ear of the silent watcher, but it is not the music he expects. A shrike perches on the top of a neighboring cedar and curiously eyes the motionless form, and wonders, what kind of a tree that is which confronts him.

"I'd like to have a smoke, if I dared," murmurs the gunner, and his hand automatically searches for the old pipe which has cheered many lonely hours; but it would not do, for the keen nostrils of the fox would quickly scent the tobacco tainted air, and goodby to the wished for shot at the ruddy target.

Two weary hours pass away, and then the tall form of Will comes down over the hill.

"Well, what's the matter?"

"I don't believe there is a fox on this hill," says Will. "I have been clear round it and I can't find a track, let's go down and find Harry, and go over in the swamp."

"Where's the dog?"

"Lost him down in the hollow, he will find us pretty soon."

As we walked away through the pines toward the swamp, a rustle in the underbrush brings the guns to a ready, but it is only the

dog, and we meander down the hillside to the road, and cross the track of the dog, where he passed a few hours ago.

Only a few rods farther, beside the road, we see the track of a fox imprinted on the spotless covering of new fallen snow; if the dog had gone a little farther he would have found it.

“He-ee-r-e, Here, Here,” goes out the cry as we follow the track along, and the dog, plunging back to us, scents the pungent perfume, and dashes off on the trail. We follow along over the brook and are puffing up the steep side of the bank beyond, when “Ow-w-w-ow-ow-ow,” rings out from the other side, and when we get over we find he has jumped the fox and gone off over the next swamp.

“Make for the hill,” says Will, “and get on your stands as quick as you can. He may go over that way.”

And off we go at a quick trot on the back track along the hog-back. We find the tracks of fox and dog where they cross the ridge, and the writer follows them a little way to see which way they went, while Harry goes on to the big tree at the corner of the wall.

The tracks lead to the pines, so I turn off over a ridge toward the hill, when "bang, bang" goes a gun from the stand by the tree, not over twenty rods from me. I stop and listen, and soon hear the crash of some animal as he plunges through the thick brush, which lines the brook beyond. There is a narrow open place at my right, where I shall see him if he crosses that way, and sure enough a flash of red emerges from the bushes, but he does not mind the two charges of No. 1, which are hurled at him, except that, if possible, he quickens his pace as he plunges behind the trunk of a pine and disappears. Before I can get there, two reports from the open pasture beyond, are flatly echoed up the wind, as he passes Will, who has just come up from the swamp, but the fox goes off unharmed. Six shots, and the fox is yet running, and we trail him to his burrow near where we started him. He did not hole up to die, for we found his tracks where he came out, when we passed that way about nightfall.

There were many explanations why we each of us did not get that fox, but we all came to the conclusion that it was because

we did not shoot straight enough to hit him.

If the truth were told, would not a great many fox hunts turn out the same way.

After supper, Harry says: "Say partner, lend me your pipe, I can't find mine. I must have lost it. Haven't you got an extra one? I'll buy it of you. Now give me some tobacco, mine is all gone. I was most broke when I started, and could not get any more."

"Say, Harry you make me think of a friend of mine, our local editor, and something that happened to him.

Country editors are noted as big hearted men, who are always willing to do their fellow men a favor. One morning last week, one of them went to his office at an unusually early hour. He had just loaded his pet briar pipe with a charge of the mind-soothing weed, when he heard a step on the stairs, and a man of Hibernian ancestry, slightly inebriated, came in and addressed him as follows:

"Good morning, Mr. Jones, a fine morning it is, and how is your health this morning. Will you do me a favor this morning?"

“Certainly, Pat,” was Jones’ reply, “I’ll do you any favor that I am able.”

“Would you spake the good word for my friend Murphy, who has just died. They do be telling hard stories about him, and it’s the foine man he was.”

“Surely Pat,” rejoined the editor, “I would not say a word that would injure him, or cause a moment of sorrow to any of his family.”

“I belave you, Mr. Jones, I belave you, you’re a good friend of moine, a dorm good feller. Say would you do me another favor, would you give me a pull at the pipe, I’m dyin’ for a smoke.”

The editor reluctantly handed over the desired article, from which he was just drawing those seductive draughts so dear to the smoker.

For a few moments, silence ensued, broken only by the intermittent puffs from Pat’s lips.

“Say, Mr. Jones, that’s a foine poipe, I’ll give you a quarter for it.”

Mr. Editor, willing to do anything to keep his visitor in good humor, answers in the affirmative, with a deep sigh at the loss of his

pet, and disconsolately sits thinking of the discomfort of breaking in a new one; when his visitor breaks out with.

“Say, Mr. Jones, (puff) that’s a great smoke, its a foine poipe, (puff-puff) I’m a man of me word, (puff) its a dorm foine poipe.”

And he reaches down deep into the recesses of his pocket and draws out a quarter, which he passes to Mr. Jones, who transfers it to his own pockets.

Another silence, which Pat interrupts with.

“Say Jones, lend me half a dollar to buy a pint, I’m dry as a fish.”

“I’m sorry, Pat, but I haven’t a cent with me, except the quarter you just gave me.”

“All roight, Jones,” says Pat, “give me that, it’ll buy a half pint.”

Exit Pat for the desired drink.

“I have seen fox hunters with as big a crust as that,” says Will, “but sometimes they get their comeuppence. A party were out fox hunting on Cape Cod, and as they supposed, run a fox into its burrow.

As it was getting on into the day, they gave it up and started for the hotel. After they had gone part way back, a portion of

the party made some excuse, separated from the rest, and made their way back to the burrow, with the idea of digging out the fox and winning all the laurels.

They borrowed some tools from a neighboring farmhouse, and dug for about four hours, and finally pulled out and killed, an enormous *wharf rat*. Discomforted they wended their way back to the hotel with the understanding that the whole matter should be kept quiet. But they forgot to fix the farmer and he let the cat out of the bag. The town was too small to hold the party after that.

INSECT HUNTING
IN WINTER.



Photo by Edson.

A WINTER HILLSIDE.

INSECT HUNTING IN WINTER.

THE Sportsman-Naturalist comes in contact with all phases of life, grave and gay, laughter provoking and pathetic, sometimes pursuing his prey amid the burning sands in the intense heat of midsummer, and anon beneath the snow laden branches of the forest 'neath the wintry skies. Sleeping beneath the green umbrageous foliage of the cool lake shore, bedded with sweet and feathery fern, and only a few months later, heaping the logs higher on the campfire and tightly rolled in blankets, turning to rest on beds of browse 'neath the spreading boughs of Maine's evergreen spruce and firs, perhaps surrounded by snow and ice.

For fun? Sometimes. For business? Much oftener. The editor and the publisher call for more copy and fresh scenes; the dealer calls for a greater variety of specimens; or driven by desire for recreation, he wanders at his own sweet will, but ever turns to the,

to him, all absorbing subject of Natural Life, at once pleasure and business, omnipresent and ever-interesting.

A bird in the trees, a fish in the waters, a stone in the wall, a butterfly on the nodding flower stalk, each speaks to him in Circean tones, but which bring not destruction but instruction. So it happened that one day, snow two feet deep, cloudy, cold, raw, signs of more snow, etc., we don our toques and leggings, strap our snow-shoes to our backs, and, with the implements of our puny warfare at hand, start for the woods to hunt the festive beetle.

We imagine our readers saying, "What the mischief are they going bug-hunting for in a snowstorm!" But be it known that there is not an hour, day or night, during the entire year, when the entomologist need to rest for want of specimens to collect.

My companion, and at that time partner, was a short, stocky Canadian from Ontario, full of life, and enthusiastic in this his favorite study,—a true type of that hardy people to whom the use of the snow-shoe and moccasin is a second nature.

We took train for the old Malden woods, and after alighting and leaving the houses behind, strap up, and are soon skimming over the frozen surface, making for a grove of pines which loom up in the distance.

The everpresent "hoodlum" shouts at us as we pass a cross-road, "Oh, luk at the gillies with them things on their feet, don't they go fine, though? Say, Mister, give us a ride?" But although they might, no doubt prove fruitful fields to collect from, it is not that kind of bug we are after, and we go on to more congenial fields.

The first dead pine is attacked, and our hatchets soon start the bark from the trunk, and eager eyes are watching for the little creatures as they lie in their cosy nests, hollowed out of the inner bark, the surface of which is furrowed by the hundreds of little beetles which infest these trees.

Our first find is a fine specimen of the Ribbed Bark-beetle (*Rhagium lineatum*). It is from one-half to three-quarters of an inch in length, of a yellowish-gray color, variegated with black. The head and thorax are much narrower than the body, and the antennae barely reach the base of the elytra.

They lie in cosy little cells, between the inner bark and the wood, in which they transform from the larval state, and from which they bore out in the spring to lay their eggs in the crevices of the bark, again to commence the round of destruction. A large number are often found in one tree, and an entry in my Field Notes reads, "April 2, Malden, Mass. Cold and stormy. Over 100 *R. lineatum* were found in one dead white pine, and twice that number of larvæ."

The next find is *Pytho americanus*, a beautiful little beetle, blue above and red beneath, which lives in a similar cell to the last mentioned, excepting that the rim of the cell lacks the chips which invariably characterize the former.

Well do I remember the first time I found this beetle. It was in the woods near my old home in Braintree, Mass., and I was assiduously working away at a dead tree, when a strange beetle dropped from under a strip of bark which I was peeling off, and its bright colors caught my eye as it fell. Down I went on my knees in the snow and dirt to find it before it became buried in the debris. I

believe I took fifteen out of that tree, and got logs and piled them up to reach higher.

Another tree discloses a specimen of the rare *Alaus myops*, a somewhat larger beetle, gray, with two eye-like black spots on the top of the thorax. This insect belongs to the family of *Elaters*, or spring beetles, and is closely related to the Cucujo or fire-fly of the tropics.

By this time our toes have become numbed by the straps of our snow-shoes, which have borne too tightly over them, protected only by a thin moccasin, and my friend suggested that we find some cosy corner where we would be sheltered from the wind, and build a fire, warm our feet, and have a lunch. I needed no urging, for my toes had long warned me that they protested against such treatment, and we proceeded to carry out the will of the majority.

The lunch was eaten, the fire was warm and comfortable, and we lay back, wrapped in our warm blanket coats and talk over the incidents of the forenoon.

"How many beetles have you taken?" says Jim. "I have about two hundred."

"You are way ahead of me then, for I

have not over fifty, but I have two here that I would not swap all the rest for."

"Well," says Jim, "you remind me of a story that my friend Haywood used to tell of an old Judge in England, who was an enthusiastic sportsman, but a very poor shot. They were at a Pheasant drive on a leased shooting down in the Eastern counties, one day, and after the drive was over, the Judge had but two birds, and one of the party asked :

"How did the Judge shoot?"

"Oh," says the keeper," he shot beautifully, but God was very merciful to the birds."

Jim was too much for me, collecting beetles, but I could do him up on the butterflies. He was at it all the time, while I was doing more in the way of taking notes and watching their operations, than of peeling off bark. By the way, a good suggestion to parents who want to deter their children from killing birds, and yet encourage them to study Natural History, would be to make them a present of a pair of opera glasses and a note book, and reward them for good observations in the fields. The boys would have

just as much fun, and many birds' lives be saved.

We were now thoroughly warm, and my partner challenges me to a race to the next grove on a hill about one-quarter of a mile distant, to warm ourselves up, and decide who shall pay for the supper when we get back.

Away we go, skimming along, until a low wall, on a steep side hill, unnoticed in the excitement of the race, catches the toe of my friend's shoe, and over he goes, head first, into the drift beyond, all out of sight but his short legs, looking like barbers' poles, with their striped stockings and waving snow-shoes, decorated with gay ribbons from the last costume skating carnival.

As soon as I can recover from my fit of laughter at his mishap, I roll him over, like a big mud-turtle, upon his back, for a man on snow-shoes has a hard job to get up without assistance, and as he arises and blows the snow from his bushy moustache, he says, "No snow down there, crops coming up finely, that field won't need ploughing next spring."

But little mishaps like this do not trouble us, and off we go again, until the rapidly falling snow and the cold winds fairly drive us back to the city, full of renewed life and spirits to once more tackle business affairs. I paid for that supper. Canada won the race.

Although it may seem incredible to the ordinary reader that much pleasure can be derived from a tramp in the woods, when the snow is deep, and the mercury fast on its way towards zero, with, perhaps, the snow falling fast around you as you tramp over the whitened earth; still, the entomologist, as he glances over these lines, will lie back in his chair, and live over the hours which he passed in just such circumstances. How cold his feet were, as he tramped over the snow, with eyes and senses alert to catch some favorable spot, and when he has stripped the bark from some tree, and found a little insect, for which, perhaps, he has been searching for a long time to fill some vacant spot in his cabinet, how soon are the cold feet and the other discomforts of the body forgotten. And who would not endure these trifling privations, to look at this in-

sect, properly classified and in its place among others of its tribe, and on the cold winter evenings to sit by the fire and, as we examine its beautiful structure, to live over those hours.

While we are enduring privations, or working hard to get out of some difficulty, we think that the game is hardly worth the candle; but after it is all over, and we sit by the fireside thinking and living it all over again, we forget the discomforts, and remember only the pleasant portions, and determine to try it again.

Sneer at the "bug-hunter" or the "Naturalist crank," if you will, but he has pleasures which you wot not of, and these little things teach to him grander secrets than all the garbled theories of past ages. Or perhaps, as he roams the woods, maybe in a strange place, as I once did, with his gun under his arm, for a shot at some stray rabbit, he is overtaken by the shades of night in a lonely place, and with the only alternative to roam the woods all night or build a fire and roast a rabbit for supper, and then after a smoke for a night cap, can roll himself in his ulster, and lie down by the side of the

fire, and comfortably covered, can watch the firelight and think over the captures of the day, and finally drop to sleep as peacefully as a child in its mother's arms, to dream of loved ones far away, secure in the thought that there is nothing there to harm him, as he lies in the midst of Dame Nature's works.

And why not? After all, life is but a span, and nothing serious can befall us, and it be our fate to there end our mortal days, where can we find a more glorious mausoleum, than the undying cliffs, or a more peaceful lullaby than the song of the winds in the sighing pines.

LAKE TROUT
FISHING.



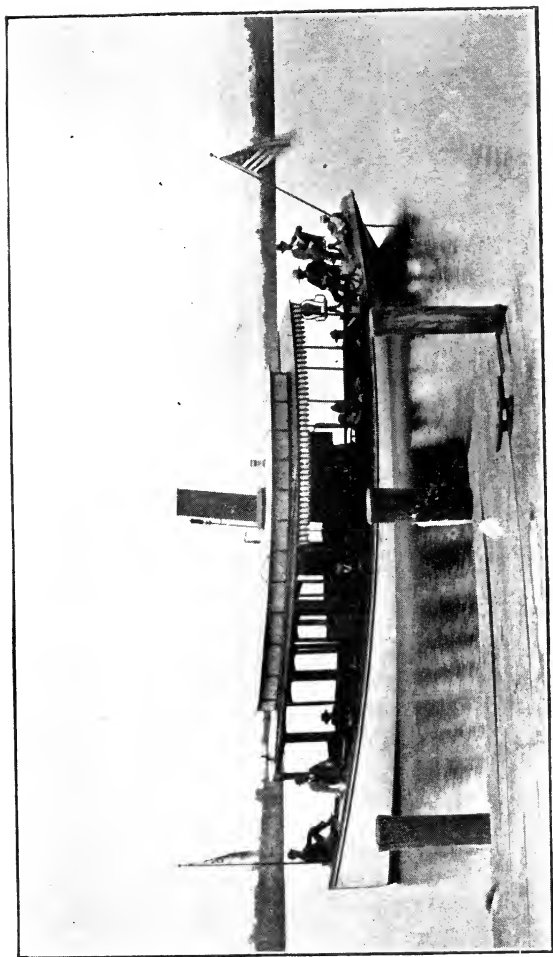


Photo by Dr. H. F. Libby.

LUXURIOUS FISHING. (Lake Winnepesaukee.)

LAKE TROUT FISHING.

“**T**ELEGRAM, Sir.”

As I looked up from my desk, a vision in blue uniform and brass buttons, held me a yellow envelope. “Any answer, sir?”

There were only five words on the slip enclosed, “Come up to-night, sure.” Signed, “Henry.”

The boy was dismissed, no reply was needed, but what did it mean? And I wondered the rest of the day. And I wondered till I went to see what it meant.

My friend Doctor Henry was seated in his easy chair, when I entered, and was calmly reading his evening paper, and oblivious to any undue excitement, that would suggest any cause for the telegram.

“What’s the row, Doc., that you telegraph me to come up? Sick?”

“Yes, sick of Boston, I am going up to

the lake, Saturday. Come on. If its not too late we will get a few lake trout."

"I would like to, Doc., but I am afraid I can't, I must stay and look after business."

"Oh let the business go for a few days and come along. You are not so important that business wont go without you. Say, my boy, who will attend to business when you're dead? Do you expect the world will stop then?"

"No, I suppose not, but 'twon't make any difference to me then."

"Now my boy," says the doctor, "Man that is born of woman is small potatoes, and few in a hill. When we die, the hole we leave, will be just the size of the cavity left in a pail of water, when you pull your finger out of it. Come on. No preparation needed. I have rods enough at the lake, and the steamer will be at the wharf, waiting for us, when the train gets in tomorrow night. Will you go?"

Now man that is born of woman is not only small potatoes, but he is weak in the knees, when the hour of temptation comes, and I hesitated. He who hesitates is lost, and I am afraid that I was lost when the

subject was broached. Anyway I went, and I stayed till I got my first "*togue*."

Now I suppose that some scientific fisherman will put up a kick and say that a Winnepesaukee Lake trout is not a "*togue*." Now let's go into executive session, and moralize a little. This fish, closely allied to the Salmon and other trout, has as many names as a Spanish Grandee. They call him *Namaycush* in the Great lakes; *Lunge* on our North-eastern boundaries; *Togue* in Maine, and various other aliases in other places, but when you're calling, call me to dinner, and I'll eat him under any name. The flesh is pink, and well flavored, though a little dry, and needs a generous allowance of good, melted butter to help it along.

In appearance they vary with every water they inhabit, and though not as gamy as a brook trout, a fish running from three to fifteen pounds will furnish some excitement, if he has got any trout blood in him at all.

The ride from Boston to the lake is long and tedious, despite the changing scenery as we pass from Massachusetts into New Hampshire, and "we had all been there before, several times," but picking up an addition to

our party at Dover, we finally got there, and left the train at Wolfborough.

The steamer was at the wharf, and we got away immediately. I must stop a moment to describe the "Mohawk" for she is a *beau ideal* for a gentleman-sportsman's boat. About forty feet long, her forward part was cased in plate glass, affording protection from the weather, while aft of the engine, curtains could be pulled down when needed. She was fitted with all necessary conveniences, and if desired, a party could live on board for weeks, as well as in an ocean steamer.

We were afraid that the weather was getting pretty warm for the fish, for it was toward the last of June, and like all of the trout family, this fish likes cool water, and as the sun gets higher in the heavens, they seek the deeper portions of the lake, so the first question was :

"Say, Cap. have the trout done biting?"

"No," was the reply, "a party from Alton Bay caught a 11-pounder this morning."

"Well boys," said the Doctor "I guess we'll get some then."

The Doctor's cottage was on the shore of Tuftonboro Bay, and just opposite the en-

trance which leads in from the lake. Our party was made up of ten persons, three of whom were ladies, but as only three bear any relation to our story, we will confine our attention to them.

The Doctor was a lithe, active body, with muscles like steel trained by years of work over the dental chair, and indefatigable in pursuit of sport, either with gun or rod, he wanted the best of everything and he got it. He worked hard at his profession and he enjoyed his holidays thoroughly, and better still, he made his guests enjoy themselves. What more could you ask?

Uncle Alonzo was an elderly gentleman, slipping down the path of life, and hurried along by that insidious disease, consumption. He needed to be careful, but he dearly loved to feel the tug of a good fish on his split bamboo, and he intended to go fishing as long as his strength would allow.

The third party was dubbed "Bugs" for he would leave his work to chase butterflies, and always carried a bottle to confine his victims. No more need be said, he was no better than he ought to be.

The day in question now, was the first pleasant one following two days of rain. The boat had been out, and fish had been caught, but no trout. The weather and the water was cooler for the rain, and the steamer started out with its living freight, fully prepared to get trout, or know the reason why.

Let us explain a little. On the after deck were fastened two chairs on swivels, for the fishermen, and a button was set on the edge of the upper deck, which connected the sportsmen with the engineer. When the fishing grounds were reached, the engine was set on the notch, and the boat jogged along at the proper rate of speed to spin the bait and not drag it too fast. The hooks were baited with a live "red-fin," a heavy sinker attached to carry it down into the depths where lurked the finny monsters, and we sat back and waited for a bite.

Uncle *Lon* and Bugs had the seats of honor, the two chairs, for the latter was a neophyte, and the former was going to show him how to do it. The doctor was master of ceremonies, and not long did they wait, for shortly Doc says :

“Bugs, you’ve got a fish on.”

“Guess not,” says Bugs.

“Guess yes,” says Uncle Lon, “confound you, a greenhorn for luck.”

And Bugs soon found that he had something to learn, for his line commenced to run out, and Doctor touched the button, and stopped the engine.

“Snub him, Bugs.”

“Give him the butt, Bugs.”

“Hold on to him, Bugs, till I get a rope round you, he’ll have you overboard.”

And it did look as if Bugs had the buck-fever and was going over board after the fish. This way and that way, starboard and port, up to the surface and down toward the bottom went the frightened fish, but flesh and blood could not stand the strain of the little bamboo rod, and the weight of the lump of lead. Bugs had landed big fish before, and though the tactics of this one were a little strange to him, he slowly reeled in his line, and the long-handled landing net was slipped under the exhausted fish, and he came upon deck.

“How much does he weigh?” was the universal cry.

The Doctor deliberately hung him on the spring balance, and said :

“Six pounds and a half.”

But Bugs saw a peculiar smile on the faces of the party, and began to smell a rat. He had caught fish before and never saw a fish of that size that weighed so heavy.

“Hold on there, Doc., let me see those scales.”

Sure enough there it was $6\frac{1}{2}$ pounds, but not satisfied, he lifted the fish off the hook, and the scales went back only to the $2\frac{3}{4}$ mark. That trick did not work that time, and the laugh was on the doctor. But one man had carried what he thought was a 6-pounder back to Boston and thought it had shrunk badly in eight hours. However, a $3\frac{3}{4}$ pound trout was good enough to keep.

The engine was again started and Bugs did the same trick twice more, and nobody else caught a fish that day. They all weighed within two ounces of the same mark.

Uncle Lon was very sore, for not only had the greenhorn beaten the experienced fisherman, but said E. F. had not even had a bite.

“Well, Uncle Lon,” says Bugs. “I shall have to show you how to catch trout. I thought you was a fisherman. I want to see that 10-pounder you were telling about this morning.” Which remarks were very rude, and were to be thrown down his throat the next day. But now, Uncle Lon only sadly shook his head and held his peace.

Next day, we were at it again, but there were no strikes for a long time, and we had made up our minds that we would get left this day, when Bugs jumped to his feet and sang out: “Stop the boat! Stop the boat! !”

“By ginger,” says Doc. “he has another one on.”

“No,” replied Bugs. “I haven’t got a trout on this time; but I wish that half-pound weight was off, I’d show you some fun.”

“What do you mean?”

“I mean that I have a bass on here. I don’t know much about togue, but I know when a bass telegraphs me that he’s coming, I have met him before.”

Sure enough there was a nice one on the hook, but the weight hanging to his jaw did not allow His Royal Highness to perform any of his favorite acrobatic tricks, and he was

too firmly hooked to get away, but he managed to kick up considerable of a muss before he was laid in the fishwell.

The excitement incidental to this, had died away, and the fishermen had commenced to shift uneasily in their chairs, despite the round of fun and jollity that was being bantered back and forth. Finally the doctor said :

“Say, this is getting monotonous, I’ll put up a stake, the first man who gets a trout, wins this half dollar, and we’ll have it engraved with its weight.”

Suddenly Uncle Lon was observed to straighten up in his chair, and his reel to sing. It was nip and tuck, for the old gentleman’s wind was short, and the fish was strong; twenty feet of line would come in, only to be run out by the struggles of the exasperated fish, while the old man would stop to get his breath and commence again.

“Let me play him for you, Uncle Lon,” says Doc.

“Not—much,—I’m going—to show—that bug-hunter—how to—catch—a fish.”

And he did, for he fought it out and brought to net a fine trout weighing $7\frac{3}{4}$ pounds. But

it took a solid dose of "restorative" to get him back so he could talk.

"There Bugs," says he, "that's the sort of fish *we* catch, *we* don't pull in minnows," and the old man was heard to murmur in his sleep that night: "Don't catch minnows."

He got the medal, and it was preserved, and often proudly exhibited in a velvet lined box, as long as the old man lived.

It was not long, and that was probably the last fish that the old man ever caught.

Let us hope that in those happy hunting grounds, where he now is, that his eyes are clear to bait his hook, and that the fish are plenty and not minnows, in the ghostly streams of the land of the hereafter. Who knows? And it is a question that we would all like to have answered.

THE NATURALIST IN THE
WHITE MOUNTAINS.



MT. KEARSARGE.

THE NATURALIST IN THE WHITE MOUNTAINS.

“**N**OW the next trip you make next summer will be to the Crawford Notch. Is that all settled? I shall be disappointed if you do not come, and so will you, for I can show you birds *galore*, and you will be well repaid for the trip. Maybe we'll get a bear.”

These were the last words of my friend, J. Waldo Nash, artist and naturalist, as I bade him goodbye, on the train north, after a very pleasant winter's companionship in the city. So I went.

It was my object to study bird life on the higher altitudes, and I had for a week been gradually approaching North Conway, by way of Lake Winnepesaukee and the Ossipee Range. I had never been here before, although I had been in higher latitudes, and I was much interested by what I had seen so far in my travels.

“I never knew you to go back on your word, old man,” greeted me as I stepped off the train one night, and Waldo had me by the hand. “If we don’t make these old mountains howl within the next fortnight, it will be because Miss Echo has got drowned.”

“Hold on, now, don’t be introducing me to any dissolute females. I am a poor weak naturalist, and I know more about catching hornpouts than I do about your misses. I’ve no use for them.”

“Well,” says Waldo, “you will get along all right with Miss Echo, for she always agrees with you, but you never see her. Come on.”

So I found myself ensconced in a nice chamber, in a house by the waters of Kearsarge brook, which carried the waters into the Saco, while the mist crowned peaks of the Moat Mountains looked into my windows in the morning, and called me from my bed of ease.

From those magic portals were seen the magnificent pinnacles of Cathedral Rocks and the horse and sleigh of White Horse Ledge. Never changing, yet ever new; never ending, yet ever beautiful, who would not be an

artist, especially if he be a naturalist, to live in the midst of these magnificent monuments of nature's handiwork.

Mt. Kearsarge, or Pequawket, as it is sometimes called, was our first day's work, and we hastened our steps to reach its foot, for we knew it was a hard climb before we conquered 3,200 feet of rocks, thrusting their heads into the clouds.

"Hold on a minute," Waldo says, "let me show you something pretty," and he lifts a branch of a hemlock growing on a bank by the edge of the brook, and there was the oven-like nest of the black and white creeper hidden in the moss.

It was loosely constructed of pine needles and dead leaves, and was lined with shreds of birch bark and horse hair, against which reposed the four delicately dotted eggs. The green, mossy, fern dressed bank, laved by the waters of the brook, and crowned by a gray and moss grown fence, formed a picture long to be remembered.

The way led along the course of the brook, through the intervale; and wild strawberries, dainty flowers, and above all, the everchanging scenery beguiled the footsteps to the

detriment of speed ; it was almost impossible to tear ones eyes away.

At Sunset Hill, the bridle path began, and we were rushing down the slope toward the open field, when as I was leaping over a patch of low blueberry bushes, to keep my feet from getting tangled, and throwing one headlong, a little bird flushed from between my feet, and was gone, but not so quickly that I did not recognize the little Junco, and as I had never seen its nest, I stopped instantly.

Forgotten was Mt. Kearsarge, forgotten the rapidly passing hours, but I searched for a long time, before I discovered it, curiously hidden in the bushes. Another of nature's gems, set in emerald green, its brown cup of fine grass and pine needles, effectively blended with the dry aftermath, concealed it till the eye caught the glint of the sun on the surface of the five little eggs. It was more neatly and compactly built than the creepers but no more dainty.

Kearsarge has features of its own. One is the Kearsarge Brook, a sparkling stream of water, the source of which is the famous Kearsarge Mountains, rising among the clouds

from many springs ever uniting to form larger streams, falling now over precipices, forming, as it were, a bridal veil for some bride of Old Kearsarge, now tumbling over rocks and roots in a mad and merry whirl and rush, as if each particle were trying to see which would reach the base soonest, then flowing quietly along under old and forgotten bridges, so quietly that one would hardly think that these were the same waters that were so boisterous a short time before. Now starting up again as if urgent business called it along in haste, and anon, pausing in some cool and quiet pool where the speckled beauties bask and sport. Now flowing along under mighty maple trees in whose sombre shade the quiet hum of insect life and twitter of birds carry one far beyond the toil and cares of life. Now emerging again into the sunlight, flowing through pasture and meadow, past happy homes, through groves where people worn with the cares of a life in the city are fast forgetting those cares and taking on new life. Lying quietly in some smooth and tranquil pond, now tumbling over some dam or philanthropically turning some wheel, gliding along over

polished ledges ; again running along over rounded pebbles, under dark pines, ever changing, never found twice alike. Such is the beautiful Kearsarge brook and offers enjoyment to all, whether they carry a rod and line, or an artists' outfit, or whether they are out for an hour's rest. A trip up this brook and its tributaries offers some of the most beautiful scenes ever put on canvas, and some of these scenes are very easy to reach. One looking up from the mill pond above the Chase shops is a fine scene, and a few rods farther up is another of a little different character.

East of Kearsarge and beginning to rise, as it were, out of the brook is Sunset Hill, formerly known as Birch Hill, which offers some fine views of the surrounding country and from which the glories of a mountain sunset can be seen perfectly, and here also can be seen the Moat Mt., White Horse and Cathedral Ledges in bold relief against the Western sky, and further north old Washington, which, at this distance, is toned down into soft and hazy colors. Here one can get the smell of the fir balsam and pine, or dream in the shade of some mighty oak. And here

can be seen the bleached and whitened skeletons of old forest trees, and picturesque old birches from which the former name was taken.

The trip on Kearsarge Mt. can be very easily made from Kearsarge village and should not be missed by any one.

The bridle path wound around trees and rocks, with numerous openings, whence the valley below could be seen, and many were the interruptions which lured us from our path. Here were the beautiful flowers of the *Linnea borealis*, and at the next turn it was some bird which hopped out of the bushes and as suddenly flitted out of sight.

About one-fourth of the way up, we heard the sound of falling water, and knowing that some of the choicest bits of mountain scenery were to be found in the cascades, we left the trail and were well repaid for the moment's scramble. A series of little falls, formed by the descent of the little brook, swollen by the rains of the night before, here leaped and swirled as they tumbled down over the mossy rocks, now disappearing beneath the fallen boulders, and gurgling, struggling and grumbling as they worked

their way through hidden channels out, once more, into the light of day, when with a flash and spatter it plunged over a little cliff, and splashed into a crystal pool below, then flowed calmly a little way like liquid silver, framed by banks o'erhung with a tangled maze of delicate green, a mass of mossy, dripping, filmy, feathery fern. These cascades did not seem to be well known, and they are not easily accessible, except by a sharp scramble, but they will richly repay for labor expended.

On these banks, as we climbed over and leaped across on the mossy and water-worn rocks, we started the Redstart, the Chestnut-sided Warbler, the Red-eyed Vireo and the Olive-backed Thrush, hiding among the bushes and the fern-grown banks.

We followed the course of the brook until we found that it would carry us away from our goal, when we turned again toward the bridle path.

We lunched on Prospect Ledge, well named, for here is afforded a fine prospect of this section of the Saco Valley.

Leaving here, we find bird life growing very scant, but see the Junco and White-

throated Sparrow apparently breeding at a height of 2,000 feet.

Speaking of this latter bird, it is here in these mountains that I heard its voice at its greatest perfection, at least two more notes being added to its song as heard in the lowlands. It warbles at intervals during the entire day, calling back and forth with its companions; and later on, as I lay in my blankets on the slopes of Mount Willey, in the darkness of the night, and surrounded by the sombre depths of the spruce forest, lit only by the glimmering stars, I heard it again, like a voice of hope calling from the depths of gloomy despair, and enlivening the solitude with its cheery notes. And as the first rays of the rising sun adorned the east he, first of all, lifted up his voice in gladness and praise.

Not for all the world could I, since that glorious day, harm one of those little creatures, or take its nest. I would feel as if I had killed or robbed my own brother.

But I have digressed, both from my path and my story. We are now nearly to timber line, and soon have passed out where the only vegetation is low bushes, a few stunted

evergreens, twisted and gnarled by the force of the winds which sweep over the summit, and the low, creeping mountain cranberry (*uva ursi*), which covers the soil wherever any is found to cover the rocks. A few more hundred feet and we step upon the tops. It has been a hard climb, but the view is worthy of the labor.

We can follow the course of the Saco river from where it emerges from the Notch until it disappears in the distant fields of Maine. Below us are the villages spread out in minute panorama, the buildings looking like toy-houses, and the people indistinguishable except by the aid of the glasses.

To the south, on either side of the valley, the two ranges show their length; to the east the hills of Maine are nearly flattened into the plain, though near by they are considerable eminences, and the view is unbroken to the horizon, with river, lake and field varying the picture; while to the north are the monarchs of the range, too numerous to mention, culminated by Washington, now for weeks cloud-capped, and on whose sides the patches of snow and ice are plainly discernible.

As we stand on the northern span we see a shower gathering about Mount Washington, and sweeping down the notch. Washington is hidden from view, and then follows Munroe; Willey and Webster disappear, and the bank of fog, swirling and swaying with the force of the wind, draws nearer and nearer.

In the midst of it all, in the gap between Bartlett and Kearsarge, high in the air, and in the very path of the wind, soars a large hawk. He sways back and forward, ever and anon coming to a standstill, facing and in the very teeth of the gale, and hovering there without the slightest discernible motion, braving and conquering the very power of the wind, a grand triumph of skill and power. It was a majestic sight.

The wind is so strong that we are glad to get under the lee of a little house which crowns the summit, and which is firmly bound to the rock with iron rods.

After plucking a few flowers of the bearberry as mementoes for absent friends, we strike down the side of the mountain, avoiding the paths, and soon are crashing our way through the foliage, below timber line.

This is the way to really enjoy mountain scenery. If we cling to the regular paths with a guide to explain the points of interest, we shall see beautiful views, we shall inhale the glorious mountain air, but we shall miss the unlooked for bits of beauty, in the spots frequented only by the wild animals, and the delightful uncertainty of where we shall bring up. Perhaps we shall easily come to a path winding around the mountain side, which shall lead us to civilization, and perhaps to an inaccessible cliff, whose overhanging brow warns us that we must either retreat, to search for a safer descent, or compel us to make a long detour to reach the bottom.

The next morning, my companion, the photographer of the expedition, Wm. H. Wilson of Boston, having arrived on the scene, we packed our knapsacks, put up our black-fly killer and boarded our train for farther up the notch.

It was our original intention to have ascended the valley of Dead or Mt. Washington River, and make the ascent of the Monarch of the Presidential range from that side, via the river bed. But we found that several parties had been through there with

camera and rod, and as our idea was to get some pictures where that everlasting Appalachian Mountain Club had not been, we turned the other way.

By the way, I am not paid to blow my bugle for the Appalachian Mountain Club, but I want to thank them right here for their excellent habit of piling up monuments of rocks to point out vague paths on the mountain sides; they saved me some hard climbing, this year. Long may they pile rocks to guide the wandering footsteps of those who reap the fruits of others' sowing.

But I need some monuments to keep me on the straight track.

Various incidents turned affairs so that we got fired off the train at Avalanche Station, near the old Willey House, the scene of the well-known tragedy.

We stood for a moment watching the tail end of the train as it sped up the track toward the end where it closes in.

Below us was the same old Saco River of numerous turnings and windings, and beyond it Mt. Webster reared its old bald head against the sky.

We looked at Mts. Willard and Willey and groaned at the steep hill which lay before us, and I inwardly wept as I thought of the hard-tack and salt pork in my knapsack, and my mouth watered for the flesh pots of civilized life, and I wanted to go back. But while we groaned, we strapped on our packs, picked up our guns, and with a native to put us on the right track, started up the slope.

We soon were on our proper path, and bade our guide a long, lingering farewell; more sad, because he was the first man whom I had struck in New Hampshire who would not take a "tip" for service rendered, and I feared he would not live long,—he was too delicate for that gall-bracing climate. I found his mate when I came back. God bless them! They restored my faith in humanity. I had begun to think that I was only the creature of unfortunate circumstances doomed to unlock my pocket, for the benefit of humanity. But the inhabitants must make hay while the sun shines, and the rich (?) tourist is game to be bled.

We tramped along the top of the ridge which separates the valley of the Saco from

that of the Pemigewasset, until the afternoon was well on the downward track, and as a slight rain had set in we began to think of camp.

The great desiderata of camp are wood and water. We had enough of both, such as they were, but they were both decidedly inconvenient. The wood was green, and the water in too small drops to be anything but wet, so we turned southwest down the slope till we struck the edge of a logger's tract, from the like of which to see again, may the saints deliver me. Big logs and small logs, tree-tops piled cross-ways, end-ways, and all other ways, tough when we wanted to break them, and frail and rotten when we wanted to climb upon them, but we got over at last. (O my! but this was play to what we got later on.)

Here we separated to find the way out, or rather in, for we did not want to go out, and I was down in the lowland ankle-deep in water, mud and moss, hunting for the brook, when a shot from Nash's gun, followed by a cry from a bird which I did not recognize, and soon another shot, betokened something of value. I got back to my pack, which I

had gladly laid down while I was anathematizing the weather and the fates which brought me here, and hunting for water, of which we apparently had too much already, for the whole side of the mountain was one vast sponge.

We found Nash looking at a hole in the side of a tree, from which emanated a succession of cries, which sounded like a troop of angry cats. He held in his hand a pair of woodpeckers, which I recognized as the Arctic 3-toed variety, and as I had never before seen the nest of this bird, I was correspondingly elated.

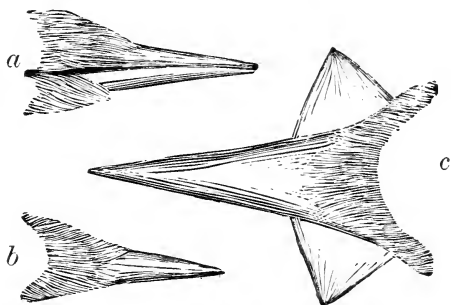
The hole was excavated from the solid green wood of a tree ten inches in diameter, about twenty feet from the ground.

At this date, June 27, 1890, the eggs had hatched, and this fact was made evident to everyone in the vicinity, by the vociferous cries which issued from the cavity.

The entrance was one and a half inches in diameter, and the hole was ten inches deep, with a width of five inches and with one and a half inches of wood between it and the outside. The nest was composed of chips and moss.

The stomachs of the young birds contained larvae of pine borers and other remains of insects, mingled with bits of coarse gravel. The generative organs were well marked, all three of the birds, which made up the complement, being males. The color of the iris was reddish-brown.

The most striking peculiarity however, was a curious white, gristly process on either side of the lower mandible at the base of the bill, as shown in the following engraving.



a. Side, bill of adult.
b. Under side, bill of adult.
c. Under side, bill of young.

BILL OF PICOIDES ARCTICUS.

This peculiar formation has apparently never been noticed before, at least I can find no record of it.

William Brewster, in his "Description of First Plumages," makes no mention of finding it on a skin collected July 31, although it is possible that it might shrink away in drying, or might disappear before that stage of development, as his specimen was four weeks older than mine. Unfortunately my specimens were not preserved, for we were not prepared for alcoholic specimens, but I have a photograph of the birds taken while alive, that shows the formation very well.

In May, 1892, William Brewster made observations on a brood of young Flickers (*Colaptes auratus*) and observed the same conformation, an account of which was soon after published in *The Auk*.

In this very excellent record of his observations, he advances the theory that the membrane aided the parents in placing the food in the mouths of the young birds.

Having paid full attention to this nest, we again turned our footsteps down the hill, and soon came across Ripley's Brook, which empties into the Saco River, near where we entered the woods.

It was our opinion, which was later confirmed, that this brook had its rise on the ridge which separates the two valleys, and so we turned our steps toward its head-waters.

This little valley, or swampy run, is filled with a luxuriant growth of underbrush and small growth, the high spruce having been cut off by the loggers.

At 5 P. M. we concluded that we had done about as much as was desirable for that day, and as we had found dry wood, and water in plenty, and saw no immediate prospect of finding dry land, we threw off our packs and concluded to lay up for the night.

We had no tent with us, for we knew that it would be inadvisable to encumber ourselves with camp equipage, and we were prepared to meet any emergency with equanimity. In fact, we found that it would be impossible to carry any extra weight, for sometimes, in spite of the light load we carried, (only 45 pounds, including guns, being allowed to each man), we found that we could not travel much over a mile an hour.

The ground was wet and swampy, the dead tree trunks had fallen in every direction, and it was a continuous drag all the time.

Hence we knew that we must make the best of the goods that nature had strewn around us.

Fortunately, a substitute for canvas, is found in this locality, and the bark of the white birch, which easily, at this time of the year, peels off in large sheets, makes a fine roof, impenetrable to the most driving rain, when properly shingled on to roof-poles.

The weather had settled down to a light, drizzling rain, so while one peeled birch bark for a cover, the other two gathered poles for a bed, twigs for a mattress, and wood for a fire, which was soon blazing merrily before the camp, and throwing its sparks up into the darkness, which had by this time gathered close around us.

What a difference the camp-fire makes ; a few moments before we were silently digging away, pulling and hauling at logs and bark, and anathematizing the fates which had got us into such a scrape, and now we were busily and happily engaged in preparing supper, and laughing and chatting over the pleasure and trials of the day.

The rain was falling fast, but what did we care, we had a camp-fire, built of great logs,

as large as a man could lift, and the two great back logs threw the heat of the fire into our shelter, and reflected by the roof, made it almost uncomfortably warm, and perfectly dry.

By the way, how few men, even those who go camping, know how to properly build a camp fire. It is an old saying that it takes "either a wise man or a fool to kindle a fire," but the latter has no show at all, when it comes to properly setting up a camp-fire on a stormy night.

Roll a large log on top of another, holding it in place by stakes. If you have no large logs, build a screen of smaller ones, at least 18 inches thick, and 3 feet high. Kindle your fire in front of that, and when you have got some live coals, rake them to one side for a cooking fire, and if you are not comfortable do not try camp life, stay at home where you can have steam heat and hair mattresses. But if you want to breathe pure air, before it has been used by an unwashed horde, give over your daintiness, and go camping.

Now the readers will perhaps remember that friend Nash mentioned bears. Now the bear is a tender point to a naturalist, and I

must confess that I have long hugged to my bosom, a cherished idea that I shall some day shoot at a bear. I talked bear to every man I met, until the subject was worn bare, but I did not see one, I heard some good bear-stories, however, and I cannot refrain from relating one, which seems to illustrate the grim humor of these old mountaineers.

It seems that an old hunter had brought some bear-scalps to the selectmen of the town to lay claim to the state bounty, which is double the sum paid in the state of Maine. The town officials had shown some doubt as to the place of capture of the animals, and insinuated that they were shot in Maine, and brought over into New Hampshire for the large bounty. This the old hunter combatted very strenuously, and was highly indignant that he should be accused of fraud.

One morning, the worthy chairman of the board of town fathers, went out to feed his cattle, and hearing a great noise up the street went out into the roadway to investigate. Soon the noise grew louder, and a bear, black with sweat appeared, driven by a pack of dogs, and followed by the old hunter and his strapping family of boys, rifle in hand.

They drove the bear down, rounded him up in the yard, and shot him.

“There, confound you!” says the hunter, “was that bear shot in New Hampshire?”

They had hunted out the bear and driven him several miles to practically demonstrate the fact of his words, to the authorities.

But I have got off my reservation.

After supper we made up our notes for the day, put our firearms in order and rolled up in our blankets.

Most people have an idea, that all birds are quiet during the night, except the owls and whip-poor-wills, but there is one exception to the rule at least, and I made his acquaintance here.

The White-throated Sparrows are very plentiful in these high altitudes, and their sweet voices can be heard calling to each other all the day long; and when I awoke after midnight, when the camp-fire had gone down, and, the clouds having passed on, the stars shone down through the thin branches, I heard the voice of one of them calling from far up the mountain side; and again, when the sun put up its first rosy shaft of light in

the east, they first of all woke the echoes and welcomed the coming day.

The morning of June 28th broke bright and fair, and we were up betimes, drying our clothing and preparing for the day's tramp.

What a task it is to get things straightened out after a wet day in the woods. Shoes are hard, clothes are wet, guns are dirty and often rusty, but patience brings things out all right in the end, and the bright sun gave token of a more pleasant day than the preceding, and work went off easier, with brighter prospects ahead.

We got away early, and struck up the lumber road for a few rods, to the head of the brook, and then headed for the top of the divide.

The axe of the lumberman had probably never been struck in here, and travelling was a little easier, through the underbrush made it rather hard in places.

When, at last, we reached the top, the slope was so gradual that it was impossible to get any observation of the surrounding country over the tree tops, and so we started due west as a venture. We soon heard the noise of running water and found that it was

running in the right direction to bring it finally into the Pemigewasset River, so we followed its course.

We had gone about two miles and the brook had become considerably increased in size, while the banks showed that a considerable body of water flowed through here at times.

Suddenly Waldo, who was ahead, sang out :

“Hold on, boys, there are trout here, we must have some for supper.”

I had never caught trout from a mountain stream, and I was immediately interested.

Now stop a minute, I want to dream over that a little.

There are two events in a man's life, which he never forgets. The time when he smokes his first cigar, and when he catches his first trout. There is a world of pleasure and anxiety in both, so I fill my pipe and think,—about the latter event.

Soon the light fades and I am off and away. The odor of spruce and fir, mingled with that of the fragrant weed, and the fresh cool mountain air sweeps across my brow. Tall trees surround me, and far away sounds the

rush of falling waters as they hurry away toward the intervalle a thousand feet below.

A log crosses the stream and the waters, dammed by its corse, flow over it to the little pool below. Knapsack and gun are strapped to my back, and I am poised on the slippery rock, with line just dropping into the pool. No split bamboo, with supple strength, no silken line with power within its dainty fibres; no gaudy fly to deceive the watchful eye that I think lies behind that mossy log. Nothing but an alder pole cut in yonder thicket, a hook and line fished from the depths of my ditty-bag, (the last time it was used it caught minnows in one of Plymouth's wood-fringed ponds), a worm impaled on the cruel barb.

As the dainty morsel touches the water, there is a flash, a swirl and over the log comes the spotted beauty. My first trout, an even foot long. Worthy to have tested the skill of Danforth himself, and to have been played on one of Chubbs best with gold mountings.

The vision is gone and once more I sit in my den. Instead of the tall dark spruce trunks, are rows of books, and the fisherman is only a poor scribbler resting from the labors of the day.

Well ! well ! half the fun of going fishing, is thinking about it afterwards.

After we had got as many fish as we thought would be about right for supper, we, having assured ourselves that we were on the east branch of the Pemigewasset, which was our objective point, turned our footsteps once more toward the rising sun. A course due east was struck, and we plodded along, constantly ascending the ridge, which ran nearly northeast and southwest.

After we left the river valley, we found the first bit of dry land we had seen since we left, and it was no great shakes at it either.

Here the ground was padded with tracks and signs of deer and bear, but we saw nothing of them, though I heard a bear on the night before, by the brook, near the camp.

At about 4.30 p. m. the country ahead began to look familiar, and shortly after we struck a windfall on the opposite side from where we were in the morning.

The camp of the night before was on the other side of that pile of wood, and rather than build a new one, we decided to cross it.

Shades of our grandfathers ! but that was a job.

Here were great trees, torn bodily from the ground and piled lengthwise, crosswise, and all other-wise, slippery and often brittle, with knapsack and gun to look after, and when a fall of fifteen or twenty feet meant danger by impalement on the cruel looking stubs below.

It took us forty-five minutes to go about six hundred feet, but we got across all safely and before dark were again comfortably installed at "Birch Camp," as we had named it, and busily engaged in refreshing the inner man with broiled trout.

As the first rays of the morning sun flecked the tree tops at three-fifty A. M., on June 29th, I threw off the blankets and got out for a breath of the pure, crisp mountain air, which soon gave me a desire for something more satisfying.

Our *menu* was generally composed about as follows :

BREAKFAST.

Hard Tack.	Fried Pork.	Coffee.
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LUNCH.

Raw Pork.	Hard Tack.	Water.
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SUPPER.

Coffee.

Fried Pork.

Hard Tack.

Unless the rod or gun turned in something to help out. But this never got beyond supper.

But this morning, being Sunday, I thought I would give my companions who were still snoring under the blankets, a change. So I put some hard tack to soak in a birch bark dish, and fried out some pork, in which I afterwards fried the crackers ; and let me tell you, friends, that concoction is not to be sneezed at, when made with Johnson's Educators (which by the way, is the best and lightest variety of wheat nourishment that I have found), and good country corn-fed pork. At least I judged so, from the manner in which it disappeared when my companions got at it. I had to make some more for myself.

* * * * *

Finally we packed our traps for our last journey toward civilization. We carefully extinguished the last embers of our camp-fire ; cut the cords which held the rude shelter

which had kept off the rains, took a final draught of the crystal waters which bubbled from the mountain side and started on our way down the loggers' road.

It was a beautiful day; hardly a cloud dimmed the crystal transparency of the blue vault above us, and it seemed as though one could almost look away into its unimaginable distance and see the other worlds beyond.

The birds, which gradually were becoming more plentiful as we approached nearer the railroad, were filling the air with their music, and tempting us to leave the road to clamber over the fallen logs and through the underbrush which lay on either side.

The road was not as good as I have seen, in fact it was at times rather difficult to find it at all, but when we came to a more than usually swampy place, we found corduroys laid over the mud, and we "of two evils chose the least," and only left the track for an occasional examination of some more than usually interesting feature.

We had been following the brook, at a little distance from the bank, for some time, and had heard a murmuring sound throbbing through the air, when Will says :

“I think there must be falls below here, let’s go and investigate”; so we pushed our way through the brush to the bank, and the grandeur of a water-fall burst upon our view. One hundred and twenty-five feet above us the waters of this brook fell over the edge and striking its side, which inclined at an angle which gave it a slope of about 150 feet, slid down at lightning speed, breaking the pool below into a mass of foam. On either side the walls rose up in almost inaccessible precipitousness, while below a continuous series of cascades carried the water to the valley of the Saco, 700 feet below.

It was hard to leave the scene.

Continuing our journey, at noon we came out on the side of the mountain above Avalanche Station, near where we entered three days before. But what a change. Then the sky was overcast, and the murky clouds hung low over the mountain-tops, hiding the peaks of some of the higher ones from view; banks of mist came rolling down the Notch, temporarily hiding it from view, and the drizzling rain made all uncomfortable. But now all was transformed. The air was as clear as possible in these high altitudes, where the

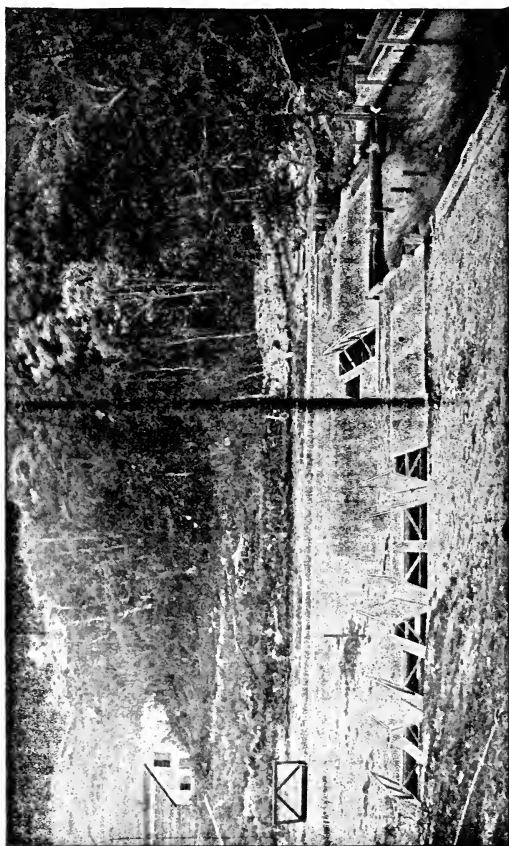
very atmosphere seemed so transparent that it almost dazzled the brain ; the Deception Mountains showed their stony wall rising at the head of the Notch seven miles away as clearly as if it were but one ; and we improved the opportunity by photographing the scene in what is, we think, the most remarkable view ever taken with a small Kodak camera (unfortunately the plate was damaged by the stupidity of the operator who developed the film), but even now it stands as one of the choicest scenes in my album of reminiscences.

No train would run down the Notch until the next morning, so we deposited our heavy luggage at the station, to be forwarded by express, and we continued on down the valley, now following the railroad and again taking the road, as the fit seized us, passing the outlets of Washington River, which carries off a portion of the deposited moisture of the Old Giant, and Nancy's Brook, which drains the region of Mountains Nancy and Carrigan.

Frankenstein Trestle and the old Crawford House, with their many associations, were left behind and as we progressed on our way

we had the unusual pleasure of viewing no less than seven sunsets, as the various peaks successively hid it from view as we travelled down the grade. We reached Bartlett in time to go to bed, and closed one of the most interesting trips of my experience.

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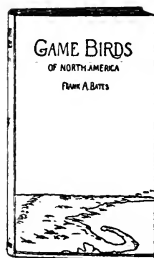
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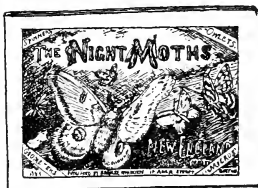
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